

I. STATEMENTS OF NATIONAL CHURCHES

Friends:- Statement of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends (March 27, 1973):

"We should be aware that there is a great diversity in the relationships that people develop with one another. Although we neither approve nor disapprove of homosexuality, the same standards under the law which we apply to heterosexual activities should also be applied to homosexual activities. As persons who engage in homosexual activities suffer serious discrimination in employment, housing and the right to worship, we believe that civil rights laws should protect them. In particular we advocate the revision of all legislation imposing disabilities and penalties upon homosexual activities".

Lutheran Church in America: (Resolution of 1970 National Convention of Lutheran Church) - "Persons who engage in homosexual behavior are sinners only as are all other persons -- alienated from God and neighbor. However, they are often the special and underserving victims of prejudice and discrimination in law, law enforcement, cultural mores, and congregational life. In relation to this area of concern, the sexual behavior of freely consenting adults in private is not an appropriate subject for legislation or police action. It is essential to see such persons as entitled to justice and understanding in church and community".

United Church of Christ: (Part of Resolution of its Council for Christian Social Action, April 12, 1969): "WHEREAS homosexual practices between consenting adults in private endanger none of the properly protective functions of civil law, and
WHEREAS laws against consensual homosexual practices between adults in private violate the right of privacy and are virtually unenforceable, except through the abhorrent practice of police entrapment and enticement, and
WHEREAS such laws have no effect on the degree of homosexuality (as indicated by various studies abroad showing that homosexuality exists to no greater extent in countries without such laws than in the United States), and
WHEREAS present laws and government practices regarding employment and military service of homosexuals are based on false assumptions about the nature of homosexuality in general and the danger of homosexuals to society in particular,
THEREFORE the Council for Christian Social Action hereby declares its opposition to all laws which make private homosexual relations between consenting adults a crime and thus urges their repeal.
The CCSA also expresses its opposition to the total exclusion of homosexuals from public employment and from enlistment and induction into the armed forces, especially the dismissal with less than honorable discharges from the armed forces for those involved in homosexual practices with consenting adults in private.
Finally, the CCSA encourages the UCC Conferences, Associations, and local churches to hold seminars, consultations, conferences, etc., for honest and open discussion of the nature of homosexuality in our society".

United Methodist Church:(Part of the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church adopted by the 1972 General Conference):

"Homosexuals no less than heterosexuals are persons of sacred worth, who need the ministry and guidance of the church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship which enables reconciling relationships with God, with others and with self. Further we must insist that all persons are entitled to have their human and civil rights insured, though we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching".

United Presbyterian Church in U.S.A.: (An action of The 182nd General Assembly (1970) supplementary to its study document on Sexuality and The Human Community)
 "Believing that the law should provide for the optimal condition of physical and mental health, and should allow for the optimal exercise of private moral judgment and choices in matters related to the sexual sphere of life; and recognizing that religious convictions held by individuals should not be imposed by law on the secular society, the 182nd General Assembly (1970) in part calls upon judicatories and churches to support and give leadership in movements toward the elimination of laws governing the private sexual behavior of consenting adults".

Protestant Episcopal Church in U.S.A.:- (Resolution of 1967 General Convention):

"WHEREAS, Man having been created a sexual being, sexuality is of the very nature of life and is good; and
 WHEREAS, Attitudes about sexuality should be focussed less on specific sexual acts and more upon the development of human personality and relationships in the context of social responsibility; and
 WHEREAS, With respect to civil laws which govern social conduct, a distinction should be made between those laws which are necessary for the protection of society and those which attempt to regulate private moral choice:
 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Convention instruct the Executive Council to initiate studies to express Christian attitudes with respect to birth control, contraception, abortion, sterilization, illegitimacy, divorce and remarriage; marital, premarital, postmarital, and extramarital sexual behavior; sexual behavior of single adults; and homosexuality".

Roman Catholic Church: (Part of a Resolution of the National Federation of Priests Councils, adopted March 1972). Note - (The National Federation of Priests Councils represents, through member organizations, about half of the 56,000 Roman Catholic priests in the United States).

WHEREAS homosexuals as a minority group are subject to a great many unjust and oppressive laws, and social and societal restrictions which serve as obstacles in the Christian liberation of that minority group;

WHEREAS the Gospel demands that every minister of the Gospel actively work for the liberation of every human person from oppressive restrictions; now
 Therefore be it resolved that the Role of the Priests Committee establish a task force to develop a model for a Christian ministry to the homosexual community".

Unitarian Universalist Association of Churches in N. America: Passed 1970 General Assembly: Discrimination Against Homosexuals and Bisexuals; Recognizing that:-

1. A significant minority in this country are either homosexual or bisexual in their feelings and/or behavior;
2. Homosexuality has been the target of severe discrimination by society and in particular by the police and other arms of government;
3. A growing number of authorities on the subject now see homosexuality as an inevitable sociological phenomenon and not as a mental illness;
4. There are Unitarian Universalists, clergy and laity, who are homosexuals or bisexuals;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1970 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association: 1) Urges all peoples immediately to bring an end to all discrimination against homosexuals, homosexuality, bisexuals, and bisexuality, with specific immediate attention to the following issues:

a) Private consensual behavior between persons over the age of consent shall be the business only of those persons and not subject to legal regulations. Urges all churches and fellowships, in keeping with our changing social patterns, to initiate meaningful programs of sex education aimed at providing a more open and healthier understanding of sexuality in all parts of the United States and Canada, and with the particular aim to end all discrimination against homosexuals and bisexuals.

(Note: b) and c) omitted for brevity)

(NOTE: National officials of The American Baptist Church and The Reformed Church say they expect their Churches to take similar stands before long).

II. Statements of The Legal Profession

American Bar Association: (Resolution of its House of Delegates at the 73rd Annual Meeting in 1973): RESOLVED that the legislature of the several states are urged to repeal all laws which classify as criminal conduct any form of non-commercial sex conduct between consenting adults in private, saving only those portions which protect minors or public decorum.

American Law Institute (a high level body of legal scholars that concerns itself with theoretical law) - has recommended in its Model Penal Code that private sexual behavior between consenting adults should be removed from the list of crimes and thereby legalized.

III. Statements of The Medical Profession.

American Medical Association trustees in 1973 urged the backing of the American Law Institute Model Penal Code as set forth above.

American Psychiatric Association: In Dec. 1973 the Board of Trustees passed unanimously the following resolutions: one, urging "the repeal of all legislation making criminal offenses of sexual acts performed by consenting adults in private", the other urged sexual practices (including homosexuality) between consenting adults in private should be removed from the list of crimes.

Homosexuality, per se, removed as a mental disorder.

American Psychological Association in 1973 removed homosexuality from the "abnormal psychology" category.

American Psychiatric Association: In Dec. 1973 the Board of Trustees unanimously with the approval of the Assembly of the A.P.A. took the major step forward of removing homosexuality from their nomenclature and from their Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Thus they removed homosexuals from the category of "sick", "disturbed", etc. This decision was based on a premise that for a condition to be considered a mental disorder, it must either regularly cause subjective distress or regularly be associated with some generalized impairment in social effectiveness or functioning.

United Church of Christ: (Pronouncement on Civil Liberties without Discrimination related to Affectional or Sexual Preference, adopted by 10th General Synod, July 1, 1975):

"Discrimination related to affectional or sexual preference in employment, housing, public accommodations, and other civil liberties, has inflicted an incalculable burden of fear into the lives of persons in society and in the church whose affectional or sexual preference is toward persons of the same gender. . . . Our sisters and brothers in human community and in Christian community are struggling to free themselves from the fear which the reality of discrimination . . . has inflicted upon them. Such persons are taking a moral stance against discrimination and the violence that it does to human dignity. . . . We proclaim a unity under God which transcends our division, and find in Christ our measure for being human. . . . The Christian churches have a long tradition of concern for human justice and civil liberties. . . . Every person is endowed with worth and dignity that human judgment cannot set aside. Denial and violation of the civil liberties of the individual . . . is, therefore, morally wrong. The Tenth General Synod proclaims the Christian conviction that all persons are entitled to full civil liberties and equal protection under the law. . . . declares its support for the enactment of legislation at the federal, state, and local levels of government that would guarantee the liberties of all persons without discrimination related to affectional or sexual preferences. . . . calls upon /all levels/ of the United Church of Christ to work for the enactment of such legislation.

(Resolution Deploing the Violation of Civil Rights of Gay and Bisexual Persons, adopted by 11th General Synod, July 5, 1977): Because of recent "widespread violation of the civil rights of gay and bisexual persons in the name of Christianity," because "gay and bisexual persons have become victims of violence, including murder allegedly as a result of fanatical prejudice kindled recently by those who publicly espouse and exploit irrational fear," because "the recent referendum in Dade County, Florida, represents a new reactionary movement which may eventually erode the civil liberties of all," and because of the heritage and theology of the United Church of Christ exhibited in "a compassion for, and liberation of, oppressed minorities," the Synod reaffirmed the 1975 Pronouncement, deplored "the use of scripture to generate hatred, and the violation of civil rights of gay and bisexual persons," and called upon all levels of the church to continue to work for civil rights legislation at federal, state, and local governmental levels.

Unitarian Universalist Association (General Assembly, June, 1977): resolution on gay rights adopted which reaffirmed the denomination's stance and which deplored the bigotry and misinformation of the Save Our Children campaign recently waged against gay persons in Dade County, Florida.

GAY CHRISTIANS:

An issue for the church

By James B. Nelson

Professor of Christian Ethics
United Theological Seminary

The gay caucuses now active in virtually every major American denomination no longer will let us forget that the Church must face the issue of homosexuality more openly, honestly, and sensitively than it has yet done.¹ Beyond this legitimate and appropriate pressure, however, there are other compelling reasons for the Church to re-examine its theology and practice:

(1) Homosexual Christians are sisters and brothers of all other Christians, earnestly seeking the Church's full acceptance without prejudgment on the basis of a sexual orientation regarding which they had no basic choice.

(2) While anti-homosexual bias has existed in Western culture generally, the Church must take responsibility for its share in shaping, supporting, and transmitting negative attitudes toward homosexuality.

(3) The Christian mandate for social justice will not let us forget that discrimination continues today against millions of gay persons in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and in the enjoyment of fundamental civil liberties.

(4) The Church is called to do its ongoing theological and ethical work as responsibly as possible. Fresh insights from feminist theologians, from gay Christians, and from those secular scholars who frequently manifest God's "common grace" in the world remind us of the numerous ways in which our particular sexual conditionings color our perceptions of God's nature and presence among us. If the Protestant Principle warns us against absolutizing historically relative theological judgments, so also our openness to continuing revelation should convince us, with some of our ancestors-in-faith, that "the Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth."

(5) The heterosexually-oriented majority in the Church has much to gain from a deeper grappling with this issue, an enriched capacity to love other human beings more fully and with less fear.

What the Bible says

A brief survey of pertinent scriptural passages must begin with a word about our interpretive principles.² My first hermeneutical assumption — and the most fundamental one — is that Jesus Christ is the bearer of God's invitation to human wholeness and is the focal point of God's humanizing action; hence, Jesus Christ is the central norm through which and by which all else must be judged. Second, I believe that the interpreter must take seriously both the historical context of the biblical writer and the present cultural situation. Third, we should study the Bible, aware of the cultural reality through which we perceive and experience Christian existence. And, fourth, our scriptural interpretation should exhibit openness to God's truth which may be revealed through other disciplines of human inquiry.

With these in mind, let us turn to the Bible, noting first that nowhere does it say anything about homosexuality as a **sexual orientation**. Its references are to certain kinds of homosexual **acts**. Understanding of homosexuality as a **psychic orientation** is relatively recent. It is crucial that we remember this, for in all probability the biblical writers in each instance were speaking of homosexual acts undertaken by those persons whom the authors presumed to be **heterosexually-constituted**.³

While the Onan story (Genesis 38:1-11) does not deal directly with homosexual activity, it gives us important clues to some of the reasons for its ancient condemnation. Onan's refusal to impregnate his widowed sister-in-law, a refusal expressed in his deliberate withdrawal before ejaculation, was interpreted by the biblical writer as so serious a violation of divine decree that Onan was killed by Yahweh.

Three interpretive observations are important to our subject. First, the story clearly represents the strong procreative emphasis characteristic of the Hebrew interpretation of sexuality. Our awareness that the very survival of a relatively small tribe struggling against external challenges depended significantly upon abundant procreation helps us to understand this emphasis. Yet, our own situation on an over-crowded planet is markedly different, and faithful response to God's humanizing activity in Christ should compel us to reassess this procreative norm. Second, the story is based in part upon a biological misunderstanding, present throughout the Bible. The pre-scientific mind, and more particularly the pre-scientific male mind, believed that the man's semen contained the whole of nascent life. With no knowledge of eggs and ovulation, it was assumed that the woman provided only the incubating space, "ground for the seed." Hence, the deliberate and non-procreative spilling of semen was equivalent to the deliberate destruction of human life. When such occurred in male masturbation, in male homosexual acts, or in **coitus interruptus**, the deserved judgment was as severe as that for abortion or for murder. The third observation follows from this. Male masturbatory and homosexual acts have been condemned far more vigorously in the Judeo-

Christian tradition than have similar female acts. The sexism endemic to a patriarchal society ironically bore with its logic a heavier burden upon "deviants" of the "superior" gender.

It is, however, another Genesis account (19:1-29) which we associate more directly with homosexual activity — the Sodom story. Contemporary biblical studies persuasively indicate that the major theme of the story and concern of the writer was not homosexual activity as such but rather the breach of ancient Hebrew hospitality norms and persistent violations of rudimentary social justice. That inhospitality and injustice are "the sin of Sodom" is evident when one examines parallel scriptural accounts as well as explicit references to Sodom elsewhere in the Old Testament. Further, the story is not given an explicitly and dominantly sexual interpretation until several centuries after it was written — in the intertestamental Book of Jubilees. Given this general agreement, scholars do differ as to whether homosexual activity actually played any role in the story at all. However, within the context of the story's major theme, what if we assume that the writer did intend to condemn certain homosexual acts as particularly illustrative of human guilt in the face of God's righteousness? Even then, in fairness to the text, it is difficult to construe the Sodom account as a judgment against all homosexual activity, for its condemnation then would be directed against homosexual **rape**.⁴ Indeed, as Fr. John McNeill has observed, the use of the Sodom story in the Christian West may be another of those ironies of history. In the name of a biblical account whose major theme is inhospitality and injustice, countless homosexually-oriented persons have been subjected to precisely that!

What are we to make of those Old Testament passages which, in addition to rape, condemn other homosexual acts? (See, for example, the Holiness Code in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13; also Deuteronomy 23:17 and 1 Kings 14:24, 15:12, and 22:46.) Cultic defilement is the context of these passages. Canaanite fertility worship, involving sacrificial prostitution and orgies, constituted a direct threat to Yahweh's exclusive claim. Yahweh was the God who worked through the freedom of human history and not, primarily, through the cycles of biological life. Thus, sexuality was not to be seen as a mysterious sacred power, but rather as part of human life to be used responsibly in gratitude to its Creator. In this context these texts are most adequately interpreted, and this central message is utterly appropriate to the norm of the new humanity which we moot in Jesus Christ.

Also, remember that a common Middle East practice during this period was to submit captured male foes to anal rape. Such was an expression of domination and scorn. As long as homosexual activity was generally understood to express such hatred and contempt, particularly in societies where the dignity of the male was held to be of great importance, any such activity was to be rejected summarily.⁵

Vol. 5, No. 2, Winter 1975

From **THEOLOGICAL MARKINGS**
The Journal of United Theological Seminary
St. Paul MN 55112

In the New Testament we have no record of Jesus saying anything about homosexuality, either as a sexual orientation or as a practice. The major New Testament references are found in two Pauline letters and in 1 Timothy. The context of Paul's widely-quoted statement in Romans 1:26-27 is clearly his concern about idolatry. Three things should be noted. First, concerned about the influence of paganism upon the Roman Christians, Paul sees homosexual expression as a result of idolatry, but he does not claim that such practices are the **cause** of God's wrath. Second, in this passage we have a description of homosexual **lust** ("consumed with passion for one another") but not an account of interpersonal homosexual **love**. Third, Paul's wording makes it plain that he understands homosexual activity as that indulged in by heterosexuals, hence that which is contrary to their own sexual orientation. Thus, it is difficult to construe Paul's statements as applicable to acts of committed love engaged in by persons for which same-sex orientation is part of the givenness of their "nature." Indeed, Paul uses "nature" as a flexible concept expressing varying concerns in different contexts. An ethical position which condemns homosexuality as a violation of natural law must turn to a non-biblical philosophical position — but not to Pauline material — for its content.⁶

Paul's other reference to homosexual acts (I Corinthians 6:9-10) is similar to that of the writer of 1 Timothy (1:8-11). Both passages list practices which exclude people from the Kingdom, acts which dishonor God and harm the neighbor, including: theft, drunkenness, kidnapping, lying, and the like. Thus, if it is apparent that here homosexual acts are not singled out for especial condemnation, it could also be argued that there was general disapproval. What, then, are we to make of Paul's moral judgment in this case? Perhaps we

should accept Paul for what he was — a peerless interpreter of the heart of the Gospel and one who was also a fallible and historically-conditioned person. If the norm of the new humanity in Jesus Christ obliges us to question the apostle's opinions about the proper status of women and the institution of human slavery, so also that norm obliges us to scrutinize each of his moral judgments regarding its Christian faithfulness for our time — including his perception of homosexuality.

Surely, the central biblical message regarding sexuality is clear enough. Idolatry, the dishonoring of God, inevitably results in the dishonoring of persons. Faithful sexual expression always honors the personhood of the companion. Sexuality is not intended by God as a mysterious and alien force of nature, but as a power to be integrated into one's personhood and used responsibly in the service of love.

Theological stances

A typology of four possible theological stances toward homosexuality can begin with the most negative assessment.⁹ A **rejecting-punitive** position unconditionally rejects homosexuality as Christianly legitimate and bears a punitive attitude toward homosexual persons. While no major contemporary theologians defend this position, and while official church bodies have moved away from it, this stance unfortunately is amply represented in Christian history.

If we have been ignorant of the persecutions of homosexuals, it is not without reason. Unlike the recognized histories of other minority groups, there has been no "gay history." *Heterosexual historians* usually have considered the subject unmentionable, and gay historians have been constrained by the fear of ceasing to be invisible. A conspiracy of silence has resulted. Yet, the facts are there. Stoning, sexual mutilation, and the death penalty were fairly common treatment for discovered homosexuals through centuries of the West's history. While the Church frequently gave its blessings to civil persecutions, in its internal ecclesiastical practice its disapproval was even more frequently shown through the refusal of sacraments and ostracism from the common life.¹⁰

The rejecting-punitive stance today may be milder in its usual manifestations, though it continues to bear highly punitive attitudes along with its theological arguments. If the latter are based upon a selective biblical literalism, the former are rooted in familiar stereotypes. All lesbians are hard, and all male gays effeminate; homosexuals are compulsive and sex-hungry; male gays are inherently prone to child molestation; homosexuals are by nature promiscuous. Each of the preceding stereotypes has been thoroughly discounted by reliable research, but they persist in the minds of many, buttressed by untenable biblical interpretations. But the key criticism of this stance is simply the incongruity of a punitive orientation with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The **rejecting-nonpunitive** stance must be taken more seriously, for no less eminent a theologian than Karl Barth represents this view.¹¹ Since humanity is "fellow-humanity," says Barth, men and women come into full humanity only in relation to persons of the opposite sex. To seek one's humanity in a person of the same sex is to seek "a substitute for the despised partner," and as such constitutes "physical, psychological and social sickness, the phenomenon of perversion, decadence and decay." This is idolatry, for one who seeks the same-sex union is simply seeking oneself: self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency. While Barth says homosexuality thus is unnatural and violates the command of the Creator, he hastens to add that the central theme of the Gospel is God's overwhelming grace in Jesus Christ. Hence, **homosexuality** must be condemned, but the **homosexual person** must not.

William Muehl argues for the rejecting-nonpunitive position from a more consequentialist stance.¹² Maintaining that "the fundamental function of sex is procreation" and that homosexuality is an illness comparable to alcoholism, Muehl then turns his major attention to social consequences. Sheer acceptance of homosexuality would have "implications for our view of marriage, the limitations appropriate to sexual activity, the raising of children, and the structure of the family." Since we are relatively ignorant concerning such potentially grave social results, Muehl argues, we should respect the historic position of the Church, which rejects homosexuality.

The rejecting-nonpunitive stance appears to rest upon two major stated arguments and two major unstated assumptions — each open to serious question. The first stated argument is that of natural law and idolatry. At this point Barth seems to forget our human historicity, apparently assuming that human nature is an unchangeable, once-and-for-all substance given by the Creator. Actually, our human nature is shaped in some significant part by the interaction of people in specific periods of time with specific cultural symbols and specific historic environments. Committed to this alternative interpretation, Gregory Baum fittingly writes, "In other words, human nature as it is at present is not normative for theologians . . . What is normative for normal life is the human nature to which we are divinely summoned, which is defined in terms of mutuality. This, at least, is the promise of biblical religion." After examining the evidence of mutual fulfillment in committed gay couples, Father Baum concludes, "Homosexual love, then, is not contrary to human nature, defined in terms of mutuality toward which mankind is summoned."¹³

Barth's idolatry judgments appear to rest upon several additional — and equally questionable — assumptions. One is that procreative sex is divinely

commanded and normative. Yet, in light of the Gospel and of our current human situation, we might better say that, while responsible love and sexual expression cannot be sundered, procreation and sex cannot be irrevocably joined. Another assumption is that there can be no "fellow humanity" apart from the opposite sex. But is it not more biblical to maintain that there is no genuine humanity apart from **community**? Still another assumption is that homosexuality means a "despising" of the other sex — an assertion without logical or factual foundation. Indeed, many homosexuals exhibit the ability to establish deeply meaningful and loving relationships with members of the opposite sex precisely because sexual "conquest," in whatever form, is excluded from the situation. And, the logic of Barth's argument at this point would seem to be that **heterosexuals** by their nature should despise members of **their** own sex. Finally, Barth maintains that homosexuality is idolatrous because it is basically self-worship. It is as if the classic syllogism were to be changed to read as follows: "I love men; Socrates is a man; therefore, I love myself." Non-sequitur. In actuality, compared with heterosexual couples, committed gay couples show no intrinsic or qualitative differences in their capacities for self-giving love.

The second major argument of the rejecting-nonpunitive position is that undesirable social consequences probably would result from homosexual acceptance. This argument appears to rest upon a major unspoken assumption: that homosexuals in fact do have meaningful choice about their same-sex orientation. If one makes this assumption, then one might (as Muehl appears to do) draw a further conclusion: that societal acceptance would bring in its wake a significant increase in the numbers of those choosing homosexuality.

Such assumptions must be radically questioned. Actually, statistics show no demonstrable increase in homosexual behavior in the quarter century since Kinsey's study, in spite of **some** less punitive social attitudes in recent years.¹⁴ Further, it is probable that greater acceptance of homosexuality would have **desirable** consequences for families and childrearing: emotional intimacy among same-sex heterosexual family members would be less inhibited by unrecognized homosexual fears, and syndromes of alienation and destructive rejection of the homosexual child in the family would be lessened.

The great majority of homosexuals do not appear to have meaningful choice concerning their orientation any more than do the great majority of heterosexuals. There exists today no general agreement about the cause of homosexuality. Major theories cluster around two different approaches, the psychogenic and the genetic, but both remain in dispute. It is significant, however, that in 1973 the Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from that association's list of mental disorders, saying, "homosexuality per se implies no impairment in judgment, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capabilities."

The minority of gay persons who have sought therapeutic treatment to reverse their sex orientation have experienced an extremely low success rate. Behavioral modification programs using aversive therapy have conditioned some homosexuals against attraction to their own sex, but most frequently they have been unable to replace that with attraction to the opposite sex, a dehumanizing result. Indeed, Dr. Gerald C. Davison, who developed and popularized the "orgasmic reorientation" technique, recently disavowed his own treatment, calling upon behavior therapists to "stop engaging in voluntary therapy programs aimed at altering the choice of adult partners."¹⁵

The other underlying assumption appears to be this: that theological positions and ecclesiastical practices which reject homosexuality can, in fact, be nonpunitive toward those persons so oriented. This, too, must be radically questioned, and we shall do so in the context of the next major position.

The third major theological option is that of the **qualified acceptance** of homosexuality. Helmut Thielicke provides its best articulation. His argument follows several steps. First, similar to Barth's contention, Thielicke maintains, "The fundamental order of creation and the created determination of the two sexes make it appear justifiable to speak of homosexuality as a 'perversion' . . . (which) is in every case not in accord with the order of creation."¹⁶ But Thielicke is more open than Barth to the results of contemporary psychological and medical research. Thus, he takes a second step: "But now experience shows that constitutional homosexuality at any rate is largely unsu-sceptible to medical or psychotherapeutic treatment, at least so far as achieving the desired goal of a fundamental conversion to normality is concerned."¹⁷ Further, homosexuality as a **predisposition** ought not to be depreciated any more than the varied distortions of the created order in which all fallen people share.

But what of sexual expression? If the homosexual can change his or her sexual orientation, such a person should seek to change. Admittedly, however, most cannot. Then such persons should seek to sublimate their homosexual desires and not act upon them. But some constitutional homosexuals "because of their vitality" are not able to practice abstinence. If that is the case, they should structure their sexual relationships "in an ethically responsible way" (in adult, faithfully-committed relationships). Homosexuals should make the best of their painful situations, without idealizing them or pretending that they are normal.

More than Barth and Muehl, Thielicke is empirically informed and pastorally sensitive on this issue. But his position is still grounded in an unacceptably narrow and rigid version of natural law. As such, in spite of its greater humaneness, his argument becomes self-contradictory. In effect the gay person is told, "We heterosexual Christians sympathize with your plight, and we believe

that any sexual expression in which you engage must be done in an ethically responsible way — but do not forget that you are a sexual pervert!"

An ethics of the Gospel ought never forget that moral responsibility is intrinsically related to self-acceptance, and that self-acceptance is intrinsically related to acceptance by significant others and, ultimately, by God. Gay persons in our society frequently have been told by their families that they do not belong to them, by the Church that they are desperate sinners because of their sexual orientation, by the medical profession that they are sick, and by the law that they are criminals. In the face of such rejection, the amazing thing is that so many are emotionally stable and sexually responsible. If emotional problems still have a higher incidence among gay persons (as they do within any oppressed social group), we should cut through the vicious circle of self-fulfilling prophecy and recognize where the root of the problem lies — in societal oppression. Thielicke fails to do this. More humane though his position is, by continuing to label same-sex orientation as a perversion of God's natural law, he encourages continuing punitive attitudes toward homosexuals and in consequence undercuts his own hope for more responsible sexual relationships.

The fourth major theological possibility is **full acceptance**. While it usually makes the assumption that homosexual orientation is much more a given than a free choice, even more fundamentally this position rests upon the conviction that same-sex relationships are fully capable of expressing God's humanizing intentions.

Though still in a minority, the advocates of full Christian acceptance are increasing in number. In 1963 the English Friends stated in their widely-read *Towards a Quaker View of Sex*: "One should no more deplore 'homosexuality' than left-handedness. . . . Homosexual affection can be as selfless as heterosexual affection, and therefore we cannot see that it is in some way morally worse."¹

Among individual theologians, Norman Pittenger has articulated this position most fully.¹² God, he affirms, is the "Cosmic Lover," ceaselessly and unfaithfully in action as love, and manifested supremely in Jesus Christ. God's abiding purpose for humankind is that in response to divine action we should realize our intended humanity as human lovers — in the richest, broadest, and most

responsible sense of the term. Our embodied sexuality is the physiological and psychological base for our capacity to love.

For all of its continuity with animal sexuality, human sexuality is different: as persons our sexuality means the possibility of expressing and sharing a total personal relationship in love. And such expression contributes immeasurably toward the destiny to which we are all intended. Hence, abnormality or deviance should not be defined statistically, but rather in reference to the norm of humanity in Jesus Christ. Gay persons desire and need deep and lasting relationships, just as do heterosexual persons, and appropriate genital expression should be denied to neither.

Thus, the ethical question according to Pittenger is this: what sexual behavior will serve and enhance, rather than inhibit, damage, or destroy our fuller realization of divinely-intended humanity? The appropriate answer is a sexual ethics of love. This means commitment and trust, tenderness, respect for the other, and the desire for ongoing and responsible communion with the other. On its negative side, such an ethics of love mandates against selfish sexual expression, cruelty, impersonal sex, obsession with sex, and against actions done without willingness to take responsibility for their consequences. Such an ethics always asks about the meaning of any particular sexual act in the total context of the persons involved, in the context of their society, and in the context of that direction which God desires for human life. It is an ethics equally appropriate for both homosexual and heterosexual Christians — there is no double standard.

A personal note

It is obvious by this point that my own convictions favor the full Christian acceptance of homosexuality and its responsible genital expression. I have felt quite personally the force of each of the other stances described in this article, for at various earlier periods in my life I have identified, in turn, with each one, beginning as a teenager with the full complement of anti-homosexual stereotypes. In recent years, both through theological-ethical reflection and through personal friendships with some remarkable gay persons, I have become increasingly convinced that the positions of both Barth and Thielicke inadequately express the implications of the Gospel on this issue.

NOTES

- 1 For a description of gay caucuses and the gay movement in the church, see Sally Gearhart and William R. Johnson, *Loving Women/Loving Men* (San Francisco: Glide Publications, 1974), esp. Chap. 3.
- 2 See *Social Action*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 4 (Dec. 1967), an issue of the magazine entitled "Civil Liberties and Homosexuality." At the time of this writing, a bill (HR 5452) is in committee in the U.S. House of Representatives, which would amend the 1964 and 1968 Civil Rights Acts to prohibit discrimination based on a person's "affectional or sexual preference" in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations and facilities, education, and federally funded programs.
- 3 More expanded interpretations of the scriptures on the issue of homosexuality may be found in numerous places. I am indebted to a number of authors, particularly Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 1955; reprinted by Shoe String Press, Inc., Hamden, Conn., 1975); Joseph C. Weber, "Does the Bible Condemn Homosexual Acts?" *Engage/Social Action*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (May 1975); Helmut Thielicke, *The Ethics of Sex*, trans. John W. Doberstein (New York: Harper & Row, 1964); and H. Kimball Jones, *Toward a Christian Understanding of the Homosexual* (New York: Association Press, 1966). Especially helpful on the hermeneutical issues in this context is James T. Clemons, "Toward a Christian Affirmation of Human Sexuality," *Religion in Life*, Vol. XLIII, No. 4 (Winter, 1974).
- 4 See John McNeill, S.J., "The Homosexual and the Church," p. 5. (Mimeographed address given to the first national convention of Dignity, an organization for Catholic homosexuals. No date.)
- 5 See Bailey, *op. cit.*, Chap. I; Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 28f.; and Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), pp. 205ff.
- 6 McNeill, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 8 Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
- 9 Labels similar to mine have been used by several writers in attempts to sort out differing theological positions.
- 10 See Louis Crompton, "Gay Genocide: From Leviticus to Hitler," address delivered to the Gay Academic Union, New York University, November 30, 1974 (mimeographed).
- 11 See Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. III, Part Four, *The Doctrine of Creation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), esp. p. 166.
- 12 William Muehl and William Johnson, "Issues Raised by Homosexuality," *Y.D.S. Reflection*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (May 1975).
- 13 Gregory Baum, "Catholic Homosexuals," *Commonweal*, February 14, 1974, pp. 480f.
- 14 Compare the Kinsey statistics with the more recent estimates of Morton Hunt. A good discussion of the comparison is in the review of Hunt's book (*Sexual Behavior in the 1970's*) by Wardell B. Pomeroy in *SIUCS Report*, Vol. II, No. 6 (July 1974), pp. 5f.
- 15 See Kenneth Goodall, "The End of Playboy Therapy," *Psychology Today*, Vol. 9, No. 5 (October 1975).
- 16 Thielicke, *op. cit.*, p. 282.
- 17 *Ibid.*, pp. 283ff.
- 18 Friends Home Service Committee, *Towards a Quaker View of Sex* (London: Friends House, 1963), p. 45.
- 19 See Norman Pittenger, *Time for Consent* (London: SCM Press, LTD., 1970); *Making Sexuality Human* (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970); *Love and Control in Sexuality* (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1974); *A Theological Approach to Understanding Homosexuality*, *Religion in Life*, Vol. XLIII, No. 4 (Winter 1974).
- 20 Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Vol. II, *Human Destiny*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), Chap. VIII.
- 21 See George Weinberg, *Society and the Healthy Homosexual* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1973), esp. Chap. 1. Webster defines "phobia" as "an irrational, excessive, and persistent fear of some particular thing or situation."
- 22 See Lewis I. Madocks, "The Law and the Church vs. the Homosexual," *The Same Sex*, Ralph W. Wetzel (ed.), (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1969). For an example of a denominational statement strongly endorsing civil liberties without making ethical judgments about same-sex relationships, see "Pronouncement on Civil Liberties Without Discrimination Related to Affectional or Sexual Preference," *Minutes, Tenth General Synod, United Church of Christ*, 1975, pp. 69f.
- 23 See Thomas Maurer, "Toward a Theology of Homosexuality — Tried and Found True and Tragical," in W. Dwight Oberholzer, *Is Gay Good?* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971).

Reinhold Niebuhr has powerfully argued that Christians must learn to live with the tension of "having and not having the truth." "Tolerance" in its truest sense, he maintained, is experienced when, on the one hand, a person can have vital convictions which lead to committed action and, on the other hand, that same person can live within the reality of forgiveness. The latter means experiencing divine forgiveness for the distortion of one's own understanding and having the willingness to accept those whose convictions sincerely differ. Hopefully, it is in such spirit that this personal note is written, and in such ²⁰ spirit the heterosexual reader is invited to wonder with me at this point about three possibilities.

One possibility is that "the homosexual problem" may be more truly a heterosexual problem. We are learning that "the Black problem" is basically the problem of white racism, and that "the woman problem" is basically the problem of male sexism. So, also, we might well wonder whether or not "the homosexual problem" could be rooted in a homophobia frequently experienced by heterosexuals.²¹

My own experience suggests this. While in the preceding paragraphs for the sake of economy I have simply used the terms "heterosexual" and "homosexual" (or "gay"), the best available evidence indicates that we are all bisexual to some degree. True, most of us, for reasons not yet fully understood, develop a dominant orientation toward one or the other side of the continuum. But Kinsey's early research repeatedly has been confirmed: on the scale of sexual orientation relatively few persons fall near the "zero" end (exclusively heterosexual) and relatively few approach the "six" mark (exclusively homosexual).

Though, for the majority of us, our adult genital expression may have been exclusively heterosexual, it is quite probable that we do experience homosexual feelings even if such are frequently relegated to the unconscious level. And males in our society generally have the greater difficulty with this, inasmuch as we have been continuously subjected to exaggerated images of masculinity. Thus, I believe it is worth pondering whether some of our common reactions against homosexuality might be linked to secret fears of homosexual feelings in ourselves — Freud's "reaction formation," defending against an impulse felt in oneself by attacking it in others.

Gay people may also represent threats to us in other related ways. The gay man seems to belie the importance of "super-masculinity," and his very presence calls into question so much that "straight" males have sacrificed in order to be many. Homosexuals appear to disvalue commonly-held public values related to marriage, family, and children. Because we so frequently judge others by our own standards, those who obviously deviate from them appear to be seriously deviant. And, strangely enough, homosexuals may awaken in heterosexuals a distly-recognized fear of death. Sometimes our awe of vicarious immortality through our children and grandchildren are stronger than our resurrection faith. Then the presence of the gay person who (usually) does not have children may reawaken the fear of death, even though its conscious experience may be a nameless anxiety. I wonder.

Second, I wonder how much of the heterosexual reaction against homosexuality is related to male sexism. I suspect that some of our responses are. Surely, the more severe biblical condemnation of male homosexuality was not unrelated to the status of the male in a patriarchal society. For a man to act sexually like a woman was serious degradation (literally loss of grade). And in our own society where male sexism remains a serious problem, it is still the male who more commonly experiences homophobia. Indeed, the striking parallelism between so many arguments against homosexual acceptance with arguments against full acceptance of women-men equality ought to make us reflect upon this.

Third, I wonder about the possibilities of augmented liberation for all were a greater acceptance of homosexuality to come. Many of us have experienced some diminution of our own homophobia bringing new possibilities of tenderness, lessened competitiveness, and greater emotional intimacy with those of our own sex. Many of us males have become more conscious of the connection between the uses of violence and our needs for assurance of our virility, and we wonder whether greater understanding and acceptance of our own homosexual impulses might not well contribute to a more peaceful society. The list of liberating possibilities could be expanded, but perhaps the point is clear. In any event, I wonder about the relation between Jesus' apparent silence concerning homosexuality and Jesus as the image of authentic human liberation.

Precisely because we must live with "having and not having the truth" it is important that we share our serious wonderings. Perceptions of sincere Christians will differ on this issue, but we can all attempt to invite each other into our quests for fuller understanding of that humanity into which God invites us all.

Some implications for the church

The Church's firm support of civil rights for gay persons ought not depend upon agreement concerning the theological and ethical appropriateness of the homosexual orientation or of specific same-sex acts. Civil rights support ought to be considered an expression of Christian concern for basic social justice.²²

The present legal situation is still very uneven. Some states and municipalities have legislated civil protection for gay persons, while others (the majority) have not. Most states still have punitive legislation on their books, though in actual practice enforcement is varied and often unpredictable. In any

event, laws labeling "sodomy" or "unnatural sexual intercourse" as punishable offenses have a number of inherent problems. They violate the rights of privacy. They are ineffective and virtually unenforceable except through objectionable methods such as entrapment and enticement. However, enforced or not, sodomy laws stigmatize as criminal the person whose only crime is preference for the same sex, and inevitably such laws have considerable effect upon the gay individual's sense of self-worth. Further, an important principle of church-state separation is involved. What some Christians on fairly narrow doctrinal grounds consider a sin ought not to be made a crime unless that moral judgment can be defended on broader grounds of public interest and unless the behavior in question constitutes a demonstrable threat to human well-being and public welfare.

Beyond the civil rights issue, if and when churches were to affirm homosexuality and its responsible expression as fully appropriate to those persons so constituted, the implications for church life would be many and their implementation might well be complex.

What about the full acceptance of gay Christians in the ongoing life of congregations? Because such acceptance still is largely absent, the movement toward congregations organized principally for gay persons will undoubtedly continue. This movement is completely understandable, but regrettable, for the majority's lack of acceptance then continues to fragment the body of Christ.

To be sure, congregational affirmation of gay persons would involve significant attitudinal changes on the part of many heterosexual Christians. With full acceptance, for example, all of those postures and behaviors appropriate to heterosexuals in church gatherings must be affirmed as well for homosexuals. This should mean, then, no double standards concerning the hand-holding couple, the kiss of greeting, or the appropriate partner at the church dance.

The ordination question continues to be difficult. Not only division over theological and ethical issues but also differing patterns of ministerial placement and job security cause deep concern for many otherwise sympathetic church leaders. While no doubt there are presently ordained homosexual ministers in every major denomination, the vast majority of them continue secrecy about their sexual orientation. Only one major denomination has ordained a stated homosexual; the Rev. William R. Johnson was ordained by the United Church of Christ in 1972, and then only after prolonged study and debate in his Association.

The recommendation made by the United Church's Executive Council in 1973, if difficult to implement, is the appropriate stance: "It [the Executive Council] recommends to Associations, that in the instance of considering a distly homosexual's candidacy for ordination, the issue should not be his/her homosexuality as such, but rather the candidate's total view of human sexuality and his/her understanding of the morality of its use." This, indeed, is the logic of full acceptance. It is not the gay person's sexual orientation which would cause difficulty in ministerial leadership, but rather the misunderstandings and prejudices held by those whom he or she would lead. (Should a dominantly white denomination ordain Black persons to the ministry? The parallel with racism seems clear.)

Reprinted with permission and distributed by

LUTHERANS CONCERNED FOR GAY PEOPLE
Box 19114A Los Angeles CA 90019

and the **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST GAY CAUCUS**
Box 24005 Philadelphia PA 19139

Most difficult of all gay-related questions for the present denominational church is that of homosexual marriage. The ordinance of marriage has a very long theological and ecclesiastical history, and that history is a heterosexual one. Profound symbols are organic. They must grow and develop, and sudden changes in their understanding cannot successfully be legislated. Marriage, involving a wife and a husband and the possibility of children, is clearly a heterosexual symbol.

But new rites can be created to meet legitimate needs unmet by existing symbols. There are, indeed, gay Christian couples living in long-term, permanently-intended covenantal relationship who earnestly desire the affirmation of their religious communion. A "blessing of union" rite (by whatever name) could function in ways not identical to but parallel to marriage rites. Such an ordinance could give the Church's recognition, sanction, and support to a union whose intention is lasting and faithful. Indeed, if the Church is to encourage responsible sexual expression among gay persons, and then if it denies them its ritual and communal support, it engages in hypocrisy. If and when the Church moves toward such liturgical recognition, it should also work for legal recognition of homosexual unions, involving such matters as tax laws and inheritance rights.

The ecclesiastical implications of full acceptance are undoubtedly complex. Very understandably, however, many gay Christians are tired of waiting for such complexities to be resolved. They have waited — and hurt — long enough.²³ Their impatience, I believe, is a call for repentance and for urgent work by the rest of us. At its root, the basic issue is not about "them," but about us all: what is the nature of that humanity toward which God is pressing us, and what does it mean to be a woman or a man in Jesus Christ?

Homosexuality and the Bible

Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly
Dean of the Chapel

30 June 1974
Memorial Church
Stanford University

LESSONS: Genesis 18:16-19:26
Romans 1:18-32

The text for this sermon are these words of Jesus from the Second Chapter of the Gospel according to St. Mark:

Jesus said: 'The Sabbath was made for the sake of man and not man for the sake of the Sabbath.' (Mark 2:27)

Today there is taking place in San Francisco a "Gay Freedom Day" parade, and this, in a sense, is a culmination of "Gay Pride Week" which was celebrated here during the past six days, beginning with a service of worship in this church last Monday evening. The time is right, therefore, for the ministry and congregation of this church to attempt to come to terms with the theological and moral questions raised by our homosexual brothers and sisters who claim also to be Christian, and who want a home in the church, as well as by those of the homophile community who are of other than Christian persuasion, who crave only the church's support for them as citizens and as fellow human beings.

This sermon is carefully and explicitly titled. "Homosexuality and the Bible." I do not intend to address myself to the psychology or sociology of the issue, nor to the legal or even the specific moral problems that are involved. Rather I intend to take the two most influential biblical passages on the subject of homosexuality, the ones that were read in this service, and show how I believe they should be interpreted in the light of the most responsible biblical scholarship. If this attempt succeeds, I believe we shall see that the church has a mandate from its own basic tradition to affirm that there are new possibilities and opportunities for us in the theology and morality of human sexuality. So this is as much a sermon on how to use the Bible in guiding our lives and attitudes as Christians as it is a sermon on homosexuality.

The two passages in question are the ones we have already read. The account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah from Genesis, and the analysis of sin as idolatry which entails the overthrow of the natural order from Romans 1:18 following. The first passage can, I think, be summarily disposed of. Apart from the fact that the attempt on the part of the Sodomites to bugger the visiting angels was only one in a long series of alleged crimes for which the Lord had long since decided to destroy them. Apart from that, it is a manifest absurdity to take an ancient folk legend as a guide to conduct in the 20th Century. After all, we do not take the cosmology on Genesis I, according to which the earth is like a serving dish with a cover, planted on stilts in a great sea, as a serious guide for natural science, at least not since Christopher Columbus. Neither do we take the barbarous laws of the harem, or ban, which come from the Holy War ideology of ancient Israel, and according to which everything of the enemy's is to be ritually obliterated--men, women, children, cattle, cats, dogs, clothes, utensils, treasures, the works--has to be wiped out. We do not take the ban as a guide in the conduct of war (although I confess there could be some doubt about this). And we do not observe the laws on

circumcision, menstruation, marriage, divorce, ritual purity, sacrifice, etc., etc. The point is obvious, is it not? If in so many other cases we reject the Old Testament teachings, it is inconsistent, and in this case cruel, to single out the prohibition on homosexuality as still binding. (Observe the view of woman contained in the Sodom story: Lot's two virgin daughters are expendable. He is willing to throw them out to the mob in order to preserve the honor of his male guests. I am sure no literalist interpreter of the Bible would countenance such immoral conduct. And yet it would seem to be at least permitted on a literal interpretation of the text).

One of the reasons that many select the prohibition on homosexuality from the Old Testament for continued validity is that St. Paul appears to identify homosexuality as a clear symptom of the disturbance of the natural order which resulted from the original and continuing sin of idolatry. Paul's argument runs: the human race is intended to be related to God in thanksgiving; it has not fulfilled this divine intention and so the conduct of life has fallen into disorder. Now, and here is the important step to notice, to give an example of this disorder Paul draws on the secular knowledge of his time; he appeals, as it were, to the evidence of the "social sciences" as they existed in the Greco-Roman period. The theory that homosexuality was a symptom of the breakdown of the natural order was a cardinal theme of contemporary Cynic philosophy, and the list of vices, especially the phrase "that which is unseemly" in the Greek *τα μὴ καὶ κοινὰ* is taken from the moral teaching of the Stoics. Indeed, the very notion of an order of nature is Stoic; so that most of what I read to you in Romans 1:18ff is Cynic and Stoic, moral philosophy, taken over, to some extent, by Hellenistic Judaism. But that could have been penned by any Cynic or Stoic. Indeed, it was thought that much Cynic propaganda had been written clandestinely by Jews because the average Hellene could not understand how a fellow Greek could be so critical of his own civilization.

Now I put it to you -- if Paul had not been trying so hard to be "with it," to impress the Romans, he might have drawn on his Rabbinic tradition rather than on the latest thing in the secular sciences, and he would not have come out as clearly as he does on the matter of homosexuality. Woman, however, would have fared much worse. In Paul's time some major strands of the Rabbinic tradition, chiefly the school of Hillel, allowed that a man could have anal or oral intercourse with his wife, on the grounds that a man could "use his wife as he pleased". It was also permitted for women to have homosexual relations. Lesbian activity, according to Hillel, did not even disqualify a woman from becoming the wife of a priest, for which role the law required a pure virgin. Only sexual relations between men were forbidden because, one speculates, only an adult male was fully in the image of God.

Now I share all this with you to show that the matter at the time of the New Testament was much less clear cut than Paul's passage in Romans 1:18ff suggests; that indeed the customs governing sexual activity in the society in which our Lord Jesus Christ grew up were much less severe than Roman 1:18ff suggests; that the rabbis at the time of the New Testament did not interpret the Sodom episode as severely as we do; and that our current laws are a texture of cruel misunderstanding which make criminals of us all, misunderstandings inspired by an ignorant reading of passages like

Romans 1:18ff and the Sodom story. It is, of course, hard to think oneself into the minds of our legislators and the tradition that formed our laws, but one can't help feeling that had there been more zeal to understand and less zeal to command, the natural order would not have been so easily interpreted as permitting only the so-called "missionary position" (that is a term those of us who lived in Africa learned) in heterosexual intercourse -- genitals only, with the woman on her back, underneath. I understand that in many states of this republic it is still illegal, because contrary to nature, for the woman to be on top in sexual intercourse; a marvelous example of the relation between sexual freedom and women's liberation. Who can now escape a pang of sardonic humor whenever he hears the phrase, "woman's place in our society"? Why, on her back, of course! These laws were inspired, I suggest in no small measure by Romans 1:18ff.

But it should not be forgotten that Paul is also the one who wrote, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free, therefore stand fast in your freedom and do not return to a yoke of bondage". (Galatians 5:1) And if we understand Romans 1:18ff, as I have already suggested in passing, we shall see that not even here does Paul compromise his vision of Christian freedom. Pay attention to how he says it, rather than to what he says. Firstly, he states that there is something radically awry in human nature, something deeply wrong. And he says that is because we have willfully lost contact with the source of our humanity, to whom we should be related in the attitude of thanksgiving. True humanity for Paul is to dwell gratefully at the fountainhead of being, the mark of true humanity the generous openness to life whose name is gratitude, in the Greek *Εὐχαριστία*, Eucharist. He then looks to secular science, moral philosophy in this case, for symptoms of this state of estrangement, and comes upon the popular Cynic-Stoic philosophical analysis which he adopts as more "advanced" and "scientific" than his own rabbinic tradition which, you recall, is confused on the matter of homosexuality, and has a definitely lower view of women than this Cynic-Stoic teaching has; (stow that away for those who accuse Paul of being a woman hater). (At least, here in this Cynic-Stoic teaching, women are on a par with men in the order of transgression; for the rabbis, they were not even worthy of being sinners). So Paul's method is liberal; he draws on the best knowledge of his times. And I suggest that in order to be Pauline in our exegesis we must do what he does rather than woodenly take over than what he says.

Now to think Biblically according to Paul's example is to take the great theme, in this case the theme is sin, the woundedness of human being, its estrangement from its source, to take this great theme as a point of departure, and then to use the best means at our disposal to delineate how sin is occurring in our present human situation. That sin works its destructive purpose seems as true now as it was then; that homosexuality is the clear symptom of sin's work is not clear at all. And this brings us to the question of the natural law, raised by this Pauline passage.

Briefly, as I understand it, modern natural law theory, (and here I am being guided by a Jesuit from Alma College in Los Gatos), a modern natural law theory is based on the self-evident assumption that what the good human life is cannot be decided unless one also knows what human nature is. Just as one cannot say that the good life for a rhinoceros is to fly from tree to tree, for obvious reasons, so one cannot decide what the good is for man

unless one know the nature of man. (Parenthetically, I do not say that judgments about the good flow automatically from knowledge of the facts, "ought" cannot be derived from "is" without the element of judgment entering in. But, nevertheless, "ought" cannot be promulgated without knowledge of "is"). And a second self-evident basis of modern natural law theory is that we all seek happiness, consciously and unconsciously, in the very structure and orientation of our being; and that this happiness is attained along with the good. The happy life is the good life. The good life is the happy life. And so, natural activity is to act in order to achieve happiness, on the understanding that happiness can only be found when the true needs of human beings are fulfilled. And what these true needs are is to be ascertained by "right reason", as it used to be called. Nowadays Aquinas' "right reason" is the social, medical and human sciences. And so in a university whose medical center performs more sex change operations than most other places in the world, where the complexity of sexual identification should be better understood than most other places, we are brought by common honesty to the statement; homosexual activity is for some people (between 8% and 10% of our population, as many as 20 million of our fellow Americans) in accordance with the natural law. And it would contravene the natural order to force them into heterosexual activity, violating their drive for happiness according to the needs which arise out of the structure of their own existence.

I make bold to say that St. Paul, who broke with the Jewish law because it functioned for him as a tyrant, forcing an alien attitude on his humanity, who gave up his birthright, his national identity, his job security, his rosy future, when he "came out" for Jesus the outcast Messiah, and for freedom, that St. Paul, if he had known what we know, if he had had the advantage of the findings of the social and medical sciences would have come to the same conclusion as I have. I have tried to do what Karl Barth advised every interpreter of Paul to do; that is, to try to see our world through the eyes of Paul; and what I see is that the one who did not hesitate to draw on Cynic and Stoic moral science would not have hesitated to draw on our modern scientific resources.

Now I know that some of you are uneasy, even shocked. This sermon represents for me a milestone in a long and painful journey from the silent contempt for homosexuals because of a careless reading of our Christian tradition, to the position it now represents. A position from which I feel I can welcome homosexual human beings as brothers and sisters of Christ. I have tried in all this to be a Bible-believing Christian. I trust the position presented here is biblical in the truest sense; for the biblical view of how God reveals himself means God has revealed himself to his church, through the gay christian movement, in the advances in the social and medical sciences, and in the new possibilities and opportunities for relations between the sexes being opened up by the women's movement. Now clearly there is nothing so much in need of redemption as human sexuality. And in the liberation of gays and women the redeeming work of Christ is reaching the dark places of our pain and shame. Who knows, soon sexuality may indeed be redeemed; may be a new source of life and light; no more shame and appression.

Our beloved Lord Jesus, the standard by which we assess movement in history for revelation of God, gave himself that others might live. This radical being-for-others is the overarching mandate which the church has from her Lord. And under this mandate we welcome all sinners, hetero-and homosexual.

God knows we all need redemption in our sexual lives. We all need the grace of love, respect, self control and fidelity; a deepening of friendship, a rebirth of trust, of gentleness, of mutual service, of our need for one another, of honesty and humility and generosity.

I attended, for an hour or so, the gay dance that was held at Tresidder last evening, and I was overcome with a sense of the scandal of a church-abandoned community; as if there were one group of people to whom the mercy, the presence of the encountered Christ somehow, by definition, does not extend. I don't know if I have ever experienced before the horror of a church-abandoned community and a sense of the intolerability of that. God knows that our heterosexual community is bad enough and the church works hard and long to be an instrument of redemption there. What about the 10% of our fellow human beings in this country whose community the church simply passes by as if it did not exist? He gave himself for us. for all of us, and his spirit is the spirit of love, of joy, of peace, of patience, of kindness, of gentleness, of meekness, of fidelity and of self-control. Let there be a rebirth of Christ in his church.

Now the traditions are mostly silent about the sexuality of Jesus, but there are hints that he had a special relationship with two people: the one was Mary Magdalene, a reformed whore, and the other was a young man, named John, who was mysteriously singled out as "the disciple whom Jesus loved".

Amen

Transcribed from a tape

DEAR CHURCH, WILL YOU MISS US WHEN WE'RE GONE?

Mary Knotts

I am six. My parents are really nice to me, except that I don't see them often. They have to work a lot. But I understand. I play out a lot - with the neighborhood kids. We pretend with our dolls. We make believe about war and family. And we invent things. Did you know that an old brick rubbed on a sidewalk leaves a powder that will make red paint? Just like Indians made their paint.

We do see our parents on Sunday. First to Sunday school then to church, then home where we all eat together. Mom is Methodist and Dad is Presbyterian, so we go both places. The Methodist church has the best summer Bible school, and the Presbyterian has the best Sunday school. Church service is pretty long in both of them.

I am 12. I like one boy, but a different boy likes me. Since the first grade I have had several boyfriends. I wasn't ever "most popular," but I always did all right, and I am friends with the most popular girl. We girls have slumber parties a lot. And this year there was a boy-girl party where we played "Spin the Bottle." That was fun. The boys groaned when they got some of the girls, but they seemed to like me. They really liked Carole, my best friend.

We go to the Presbyterian church all the time now. Mom changed over. She always does what Dad wants, and she seldom seems to mind. I don't know how she manages to do so many things. This year the mother of one of my girlfriends told me that our church wasn't right, that we had lost what Jesus meant. I went to church with her and saw that there was a lot more enthusiasm than at our church. I was going to talk to my minister about it, but you have to have an appointment and I know I'm not important enough for that. I am reading a lot, though, and learning things even my friend's Mom doesn't know. The church is getting to be pretty important to me. I do wish Presbyterians could keep the good books they have but also get the enthusiasm the other church has.

I am 16. I am so much in love with Lee - and he loves me! Someday we are going to get married and have two children. It's really hard to wait. I mean, I really want him - and we do love each other. I don't quite understand why we should wait to have sex when we love each other. We've both learned in church that we ought to wait, but no one ever tells us why - except that I might get pregnant. Carole, my best friend in junior high, got pregnant when she was 14. She quit school, of course. I still visit her, but not many of the kids do. It bothers me to go because of the way she treats her children. Anyhow. Lee and I aren't going all the way until we're married - except we almost did once and it was beautiful. I know God couldn't mind, since we love so much.

I

I am 20. So much has happened since I was 16. That very next year I began to see that I had to come to a decision about my life. It could be whatever I made it. I believed very deeply that God had a plan for me. My job was to find it. There didn't seem to be anything specific, but I knew I was right. What with the minister's sermons and my reading - and the people I talked to - I came up with the idea that the way to learn God's will is to look at your interests and your skills and at the teachings of Jesus. For me all this added up to becoming a director of Christian education or doing some kind of work for the church. I talked long hours with Lee, but he seemed to be heading a different way. Our values were growing apart. So we split up. It was hard, and for a long time I couldn't get over it. But now, finally, that is all behind me.

In college I've been taking courses that will help me work with people. I've been into an agnostic thing this year, but I have a really deep faith that God is, even if it isn't logical for him to be. I figure I'll get a clearer picture later. I am dating different guys, but I really prefer to be with my roommate. I don't quite understand the feeling I have for her, but just being with her makes everything good. I have had this sort of feeling before, but always for older women. Mom said it was natural to have crushes on teachers and older friends, but with Maureen things are a bit different. She just broke up with her fiance, and she gets so lonely. At night I hold her, and we sleep together. A few times this has led to a kind of sex, and I really enjoyed giving her pleasure. I'm sure no one would understand, so we just keep to ourselves what we do. In fact, during the day we don't even admit it to each other. We spend a lot of time discussing philosophy and religion, and we have devotions and Scripture study together. I've never been this close to anyone before - not even Lee.

I am 30. Much, much has happened in ten years. Maureen married a missionary and they went overseas. I am very pleased because she seems so happy. About that time I was moving into an alone phase. I wanted to direct all my concern to God, prayer and study. I became very serious, though I still had fun. I went to graduate school, spent a couple of years in psychotherapy, and worked in the field of Christian education. I figured out that the thing with Maureen was more than just a passing experience. I am a lesbian. After therapy I might have gone toward men. But I had already established a good relationship with Karen, and I just couldn't imagine life without her. Of course, we've been together only one year. I've studied a great deal about homosexuality, and I realize that the odds are against our staying together all our lives. But I believe we will. With homosexuals a permanent relationship is more difficult because there are no social forces to keep couples together. Quite the contrary; even the most stable homosexuals are tested by society's judgement.

Karen and I really live two lives - one when we are alone together and another when society sees us. Our friends are glad that our lives seem happy, but most of them wish we could "find the right man." Both of us are quite feminine and we enjoy male friends, so I doubt that anyone suspects our relationship.

But that is sad. We would like to share all of ourselves with our friends. We are proud of our love. Sometimes I resent having to hide what I consider so right and good. One would think that, of all people, Christians would understand this kind of responsible, committed love. But the church is the last place where we could be honest and keep our jobs - and our dignity. So we will just live our own lives, play the hetero game, and recognize the fact that the church is not mature enough to accept all people.

II

I am 40. Ten more years and much more has happened. Karen and I finally got tired of the double standard, so we left our jobs in the church. We left the institutional church altogether and joined a new community of Christians. We meet in homes to study, worship, and share our lives. Most of us are homosexual, although a few are straight friends who believe as we do about love and responsibility.

Karen and I are still together, but at times it has been very hard. For her, leaving the institutional church was particularly difficult. In addition,

although she fully accepted our relationship when we were alone, she had trouble sharing it even with other lesbian friends. The effects of our society's enculturation had proved too lasting. We still don't talk as freely with others as I would like, but we have found a sort of compromise. Of course we had all the adjustments that any couple must make when two personalities come together. We think we have done pretty well, though we realize we will always be vulnerable.

Our work is still the work of the church, though we now do it through secular agencies. Life is filled with people, sadness, celebration, rushing, resting - and love. At work we still have to hide our life style, but then the secular world doesn't claim to accept all people.

Every now and then I wonder about the institutional church. I find myself asking it: Do you miss us? How many more people like us are hidden in your ranks? (Conservative estimates would indicate that every congregation of 500 members has about 15 who are homosexual.) What are you doing to help your young homosexuals understand and affirm themselves? Yes, I know you express a willingness to help "cure" them, but many of us feel we are quite well. We don't want healing; we want acceptance. Our theology prevents us from denying our Christ-affirmed selves by letting you label us as sick.

Dear church, will you miss us when all of us are gone?



*The
Universal
Fellowship
Today*

THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP TODAY

A church which proclaims liberation for all, a church which extends its ministry to black and brown and yellow and white alike, a church in which women and men are one in Christ Jesus; a church in which there is a mingling of rich and poor, old and young, handsome and homely, butch and fem, transvestites and leather devotees; a church which welcomes gay people and straight people to worship together, to witness together, and to work and serve together—such a church is, indeed, a rare church in the twentieth century.

But this is the kind of church described in the pages of the New Testament. This is the kind of church revealed to the Rev. Troy D. Perry in the modern day revelation which led to the founding of the Metropolitan Community Church in Los Angeles on October 6, 1968.

The story is told well in full in Rev. Perry's autobiography, *The Lord Is My Shepherd and He Knows I'm Gay*. Having been discharged from the ministry in the church in which he was ordained and was serving as pastor, and having been ostracized from membership in that Christian church, Rev. Perry, after a period of despondency and search, received from God the call to found a church whose doors would be open to all of God's children without distinction or discrimination.

The church grew rapidly and visibly in numbers and invisibly in inner strength and drive. It spread to other cities. By the summer of 1970, hundreds of women and men who were determined that their right to the name Christian, that their inheritance as God's own children could not and would not be abridged or terminated by acts of human prejudice gathered together in Los Angeles for the first General Conference of the young church. There were representatives from MCC's in San Diego, San Francisco, Chicago, and Los Angeles. It was the beginning of a world-wide ministry. The Rev. John H. Hose, one of the four elected to the first governing board, the board of elders, was to say in his keynote address, "Is not the single goal, the single purpose, of ALL churches (and, indeed, God's purpose) to improve human relationships? The centrality of love as the positive dynamic in all human relationships is generally presupposed. I believe we need to strive mightily to convince all humankind that LOVE and JUSTICE are synonymous. *We have become separate members of the Body of Christ out of necessity, because that Body had strayed from demonstrating that all human beings need not only to be loved, but need to be dealt with justly!*"

One year later 18 congregations sent representatives to the second General Conference, also held in Los Angeles. Dr. Evelyn Hooker was the climactic speaker for the closing service.

In 1972 more than 40 congregations sent delegates to the third General Conference, again held in Los

Angeles. In 1973 sixty congregations met in Atlanta, GA. The board of elders was expanded from four members to seven and along with Rev. Perry and Rev. Hose, Rev. Richard Ploen, Rev. James Sandmire, Rev. John Gill, Rev. Freda Smith (the first woman), and Rev. Richard Vincent were elected to its membership.

The Faith, Fellowship, and Order Commission was established at this conference for the purpose of studying the doctrine and ministry of the Fellowship. It was ordered to report to the 1978 General Conference.

A THEOLOGY FROM THE PEOPLE

That report, developed from the "grassroots" of the church — women and men, lay people and clergy from the United States, Great Britain, Canada, and Australia— was presented to the 1976 General Conference and published in full in the Winter 1976 *IN UNITY — The Gay Christian* (the news and opinion journal of the Universal Fellowship).

The report explained "theology" as a never ending task, using human concepts and human words which are always changing. But the basic truth and faith behind theology remain the same. The task of theology is to explain our faith and message to the people in terms they can understand.

The theological task of the Universal Fellowship is to determine the implications of God's universal love as that applies to our church's life and ministry, and to determine the implications of God's revealing that message through a church composed of worshipping communities constituted primarily of gay Christians.

The report, which was an interim report scheduled for more work and study between the 1976 and 1977 General Conferences, defined the community to which MCC is called to minister. "It is likely for the foreseeable future that our congregations may be largely gay in composition. That is congruent with our call and our beginnings. But also congruent with our call is the fact that we exist for the world. Our very existence is a prophetic witness to the world and to the church. To seek to serve only the gay community, however, is not only a misunderstanding of our call; it is also a misunderstanding of our humanity. We must learn to discard our limiting categories for human persons and recognize that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, straight nor gay."

In bringing the Gospel into focus in order to meet the needs of the community, the report says, we must embrace with a sense of certainty the knowledge that the Spirit is indeed about a "new thing" in our history. "We can simply listen to the Spirit, who still speaks in the church, and respond, enriching our lives and those of the community we serve. To do so is to rediscover the power of Pentecost. To fail to do so is to relegate ourselves to irrelevancy. "This can be done through worship

and a flexible dynamic approach to education; through structuring an environment in which community and personhood may flourish; through assuming a stance of advocacy for all oppressed peoples; through exploring honestly and developing our understanding of ethics and lifestyle in relationship to the Gospel; through serving the pluralistic community around us in love and care."

The unique *emphasis* of MCC is dealing with human sexuality openly and honestly as Jesus did. "MCC recognizes that God fully intended for human beings to be human and sexual and that sexuality should be an integral part of the wholeness of a fully human person. But our sexuality is not and should not be the focal point of our lives. MCC emphasizes that everything in our life, including our sexuality, must center on our relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. This God becomes relevant in the Jesus who related to Samaritans (foreigners), women (who were considered inferior), lepers (social outcasts), sinners (supposedly rejected by God), and other rejected elements of society."

A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Guided by such a self image of its life and ministry, MCC has spread around the world in its first eight years with more than 100 congregations; 130 ordained and licensed ministers; hundreds of deacons, exhorters, and seminary students, and thousands of affiliated members, friends, and followers. In addition, it has developed a strong and effective ministry to men and women in prison, and has established commissions, boards, committees, and task forces at its General Conferences to deal with various aspects of the ministry and government of the Fellowship. The 1974 General Conference was held in San Francisco. It was Dallas in 1975 and Washington, DC in 1976.

By 1976 there were three women and four men on the board of elders, governing the worldwide church in carrying out the directives of the General Conferences. Rev. Carol Cureton and Rev. Nancy Wilson were the second and third women elected to the body. The Rev. Charlie Arehart came on to the board in 1976. The Founder, Rev. Troy Perry, has been elected moderator of the board after each election of new members and he serves full time in that administrative position.

Rev. Lee Carlton served for several years as coordinator of World Church Extension and pastor of MCC Sydney, Australia. When he was reassigned to serve as coordinator of Church Extension in Great Britain there were nine congregations in Australasia and the Rev. Jan Weymouth, the first woman minister licensed by MCC in Australia, was elected coordinator. The Rev. Sylvanus Maduka, pastor of MCC Zaria, Nigeria, was ordained as an MCC minister in 1976 and serves as coordinator in that third world continent. Rev. Robert Wolfe, founding

pastor of MCC Toronto, is coordinator of Church Extension in Canada.

EMPHASIS ON CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION

From the beginning, Christian Social Action has been an involvement of great importance to many MCC members, including its founder, Rev. Perry.

In the late 1960's and in the early 1970's, Troy Perry led marches, promoted demonstrations, staged sit-ins, and fasted in public to advance the cause of gay rights. As times changed, Rev. Perry and MCC members became active in additional approaches to gaining freedom from the oppression they felt had too long been laid on gay people. For example, the moral strength and united effort of MCC in California is felt by many to have been a major factor in the passage of the gay rights bill in that state's assembly in 1975, sponsored by Assemblyman Willie Brown and signed into law by Governor Edmund Brown.

The Universal Fellowship opened the first gay rights information office in Washington, DC in 1975. In 1976, MCC joined with leaders of the gay community from all segments of the United States to establish the National Gay Rights Lobby in Washington. Rev. James Sandmire, an elder of the Fellowship, was elected to the thirty member board of directors, along with other MCC members.

Adam DeBaugh, chairperson of the Fellowship Commission on Christian Social Action, states in the *Workbook* of that commission, "It will be wise to avoid partisan politics. I feel MCC can best serve in a prophetic role politically, speaking the truth as we are led to understand it about the social issues that are close to us. This is a role that will not involve the church in the day by day nitty-gritty of political maneuvering. We should, however, support those brothers and sisters in our midst who do want to become involved in the political sphere, for they are performing an important service to our community of faith.

"Because of our history and our make-up at this time in the life of our denomination, our primary thrust in Christian Social Action must be a human rights one, especially civil rights for gay people, while at the same time dealing with racism and sexism in whatever form they may appear in our midst."

These same goals and programs are implemented appropriately by MCC congregations in countries other than the United States who have their own set of political conditions within which they must operate.

In this day of theological debate and sociological struggle on the status of women in a number of Christian denominations and also in the Jewish communities, it is significant to note that the Universal Fellowship is committed to eradicating sexism in its theology, structure, and language, as well as in its relationships between

women and men. It has been working to achieve these goals and continues to seek education and information to assist in doing so.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR MINISTRY

In addition to the Christian Social Action Commission and the Faith, Fellowship, and Order Commission already mentioned, the Fellowship has numerous other working bodies devoted to developing and carrying out the mission of the church. Within the Commission on Christian Social Action, is the Committee on Racism, the Task Force on Men, and the Task Force on Women.

Samaritan Theological Institute, located in Los Angeles, provides residential and correspondence courses for those who aspire to the professional ministry or a deeper understanding of the Christian faith.

The Universal Fellowship Press provides church services for the Fellowship and publications for the community as a whole. It publishes the bi-monthly magazine, IN UNITY, which includes *The Gay Christian*, the theological journal of personal opinion, and *Cellmate*, an outreach for prisoners. It publishes books, such as *Christian Sexuality* by Richard Mickley and *Gay' Lifestyles* by Norman Pittenger, as well as pamphlets and booklets. A current catalog is available from the Universal Fellowship Press at the address of the Fellowship offices.

The Board of Institutional Ministry (USA) maintains an ongoing ministry to more than a thousand prisoners in a large number of the nation's 400 state and federal prisons. They distribute the *Handbook of Prison Ministry* and the *Prisoners Yellow Pages* to assist in that ministry. The ministry is based at the Fellowship Offices in Los Angeles with Area Representatives throughout the United States.

Campus Ministry, Innovative Ministries (such as to alcoholic people and handicapped people), Religious Orders, World Church Extension, Ministerial Credentials and Affairs, Christian Education, By Laws, Government Structures, and Systems are concerns and activities which are assigned to duly appointed church bodies.

As the number of men and women world-wide who are affiliated with the Universal Fellowship approaches the number of 20,000 required for membership in the World Council of Churches of Christ, members of the board of elders have cautiously indicated a willingness to study the feasibility of MCC's membership as long as it requires no compromise of the Christian ministry of the Fellowship and the outreach to which it is committed as a result of the special revelation which brought it into being.

Perhaps the mission spawned by that revelation can be summarized in the words of Rev. Elder John H. Hose, vice moderator of the board of elders, "Never losing

sight of Jesus' remarkable invitation which included ALL humankind, we have proceeded with dignity, perseverance, and veracity to proclaim 'freedom and justice for ALL' by the Grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."



DOCTRINE AND SACRAMENTS
of the Universal Fellowship of
Metropolitan Community Churches

[Article III, By Laws of the UFMCC, adopted in General Conference, 1975]

DOCTRINE

Christianity is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and is the religion set forth in the Scriptures. The Old Testament foretells Him, the New Testament presents Him, and the Christian Church proclaims Him in every age and in every land.

Founded in the interest of offering a church home to all who confess and believe, the UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES moves in the mainstream of Christianity.

Our faith is based upon the principles outlined in the historic Creeds: Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian. We believe:

In one triune God, of one substance, in the persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, God being the Creator of all, the prime mover and Spirit of the Universe.

That the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God, showing forth God in every person thorough the law and the prophets, and finally, completely and ultimately on earth in the being of Jesus Christ.

That Jesus . . . The Christ . . . historically recorded as living some 2,000 years before this writing, is the Father's most Divine Son, as well as being the Son of Man, born of Woman. And that by total subservience to God, the Father, Jesus has demonstrated once and forever that all people are likewise Children of God, being spiritually made in God's image.

That the Holy Spirit is God making known God's love and interest to all people. The Holy Spirit is God, available to and working through all who are willing to place their welfare in God's keeping.

Every person is justified by Grace to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

We are saved from loneliness, despair and degradation through God's gift of grace, as was declared by our Master. Such grace is not earned, but is a pure gift from God of pure love. We further commend the Fellowship

of the Faithful to a life of prayer; to seek genuine forgiveness for mankind, thoughtless, and unloving acts; and to a committed life of Christian service.

The Church serves to bring all people to God through Christ. To this end, it shall arrange for regular services of worship, prayer, interpretation of the scriptures, and edification through the teaching and preaching of the Word.

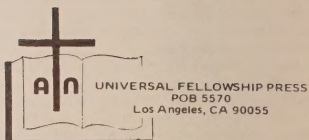
SACRAMENTS

This Church embraces two Holy Sacraments:

BAPTISM by water and by the Spirit, as recorded in the Scriptures, shall be a sign of the dedication of each life to God and God's service. Through the words and acts of this Sacrament, the recipient is identified as God's own Child.

HOLY COMMUNION is the partaking of blessed bread and wine in accordance with our Lord's words: "This is my body . . . this is my blood." (Matthew 26: 26-28). All who believe, confess, repent, and seek God's love through Christ, after examining their own consciences, may freely participate in the communal meal, signifying their desire to be received into His fellowship, to be saved by His sacrifice, to participate in His resurrection, and to commit their lives anew to His service.

The General Offices of the Universal Fellowship, The Board of Institutional Ministry, Samaritan Theological Seminary and the Universal Fellowship Press have their mailing address at POB 5570 Los Angeles, CA 90055. They are located in a suite of offices on the sixth floor at 318 West Ninth Street, in downtown Los Angeles.





Christianity and Crisis

**CRISIS
IN SEX
AND RACE:
BLACK THEOLOGY
VS.**

FEMINIST THEOLOGY

Rosemary Ruether

**the middle class:
unmasking the american myth**

john c. raines

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT REVISITED

THERE ARE taboos and dogmas, both religious and political, that die with great difficulty. Most Supreme Court decisions settle legal (if not moral and theological) questions. Not so apparently on the abortion decision of January 1973 regarding a woman's right to determine her own childbearing responsibilities. An amendment to the Constitution making the termination of all pregnancies an "act of murder" is now before the Congress. And again the old question of capital punishment is back to haunt us. (It will be interesting to see if the four Roman Catholic cardinals who testified for the "sanctity of life" at the abortion hearing will do the same against the law to revive capital punishment.)

In 1972 the Supreme Court, in effect, outlawed the death sentence in the United States. In its *per curiam* decision in *Furman v. Georgia* the Court ruled that the "imposition and carrying out of the death penalty in these cases constitute cruel and unusual punishment in violation of the 8th and 14th Amendments."

But now the lawmakers are back demanding a limited restoration of the death penalty on the grounds that *some* crimes against *some* people are so heinous that they deserve a heinous punishment. If this judgment sounds irrational and vindictive, it is the only conclusion one can draw when no legal or criminological data can give evidence that such a severe penalty makes one whit of difference in restraining violence against human beings. What it does is highlight an ancient truth: Man's vengeance always seems to exact more than Jehovah God, the stern Lord of Justice and righteousness. After all, the "mark of Cain," who wantonly killed his brother Abel in premeditated passion, was a sign of mercy that wherever this wandering man should go he should be known for what he was—the "mark" was the sign to spare him not kill him.

With the revival of the demand for the death penalty we need to be reminded that "capital punishment" did not simply atrophy and go out of fashion; the moral and human impulse grew in our civilization, and the death penalty was seen for what

it was—an affront to human dignity so gross and degrading that it violated all the precepts that the 8th Amendment was meant to protect.

The repudiation of the death penalty in the United States, indeed in most parts of the world, occurred because people came to see its unique harshness and finality. As a form of punishment it is unique. As Justice Brennan said in the *Furman* case, "In its finality and enormity death, in these respects, is in a class by itself." The magnitude, the irreversibility, the incomprehensibility of the decision to snuff out life makes this punishment incalculable to human consciousness.

It seems that the only conclusion possible by the Supreme Court was that it constituted *cruel and unusual punishment* in direct violation of the 8th Amendment.

If you add to this the fact that there is no objective justification for the death penalty, then this makes the act even more inexplicable. There is no evidence that death serves the purpose of punishment any more than imprisonment. If retribution, then, is the rationale for punishment, there aren't any limits; for the same reasoning that could justify death for a terrible crime could also justify any form of prolonged torture (which conceivably could better fit the crime). However, Justice Marshall in the *Furman* case determined that "the history of the 8th Amendment supports only the conclusion that retribution for its own sake is improper."

Capital punishment is wrong because it is an affront to human dignity, and it is a fundamental degradation of the punisher (that's us) and the punished alike. The death penalty is immoral in any form because it is inconsistent with the self-respect of a civilized people.

This is an election year and the polls indicate that the people favor the restoration of the death penalty; therefore, some legislators feel it expedient to vote for such a law. Given the above-mentioned considerations, this would be both dishonest and irresponsible. Since no executions will take place during years of constitutional challenge, the people will be doubly deceived by a political ploy designed to appease temporarily their fears and anxieties. It is possible that the cry for the restoration of the death penalty is a desperate one, wrung from a people frustrated at every level in their efforts to curb violence or attain law and order. It would be a tragedy if politicians, playing to that desperation, act out a legislative charade that is patently unconstitutional. But then who knows in the year of Watergate how desperate the politicians are?

HOWARD MOODY

CRISIS IN SEX AND RACE:

BLACK THEOLOGY vs. FEMINIST THEOLOGY

Rosemary Ruether

THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT expressions of liberation theology to emerge from the American experience in the late sixties are black theology and feminist theology. Unfortunately, an undeclared war is brewing between them. First white male-dominated seminars across the country adjusted their self-absolutizing perspective slightly to find a few crumbs for Black Studies. More recently they divided these crumbs even further to create a parallel corner for Women's Studies. Thereby these two expressions of criticism of the dominant social context of theological education have been set up to compete with each other.

The ruling class typically puts minority groups at each other's throats, and this could well be another example, unless blacks and women themselves figure out how to avoid the trap. The black caucuses, appearing a year or two earlier than the women's groups, have generally denied reciprocal solidarity with the women's movement. (Some black seminary professors here and there are notable exceptions.) The second women's movement, like the first, arose as women working for black liberation began to address the issues of their own liberation. Initially women analysed their own oppression by comparing it to racism. Then, finding their own concern scorned by blacks, they withdrew in hurt alienation.

Are these two causes quite unrelated? Are blacks correct in denying solidarity with the women's movement, and are feminists specious in comparing sexism to racism? I would argue that historically racism and sexism have been interrelated but not exactly "parallel." Rather, they have been interstructural elements of oppression within the overarching system of domination by white males.

Moreover, this interstructuring has the effect of alienating white women, black women and black men from each other. Each group tends to suppress

the experience of its racial and/or sexual counterpart. The black movement constantly talks as though "blacks" means black males. Hence it conceals an opposition between black males and black females. The women's movement fails to integrate the experience of poor and nonwhite women. Much of what it means by the "female experience" is in fact class-bound, restricted to the experience of a fairly atypical group of white, usually childless, women who are blocked in their efforts to break into the bastions of white, male, upper-class privilege.

We must understand these oppositions—between black *males* and black *females*, and between *white* females and *black* females—in order to understand the complexity of the interpenetration of racism and sexism in a class society. Simplistic references to sexism in general and racism in general will not suffice.

Black Theology: Sexist?

James Cone is the most notable of the younger, militant black theologians. He appears to reject any coordination between black theology and women. He has cited only part of the key scriptural passage Galatians 3:28: "In Christ there is neither slave nor free, black nor white." Class oppression is reduced to racism, and women are omitted from St. Paul's vision of human liberation. Cone has declared that women are not a "people" and do not have a "church," implying that they cannot be a liberation movement. Recently he has indicated to this author that these statements have been misunderstood, that he does not negate the women's movement as a legitimate liberation struggle. Nevertheless, he has come to symbolize for the women's movement the pervasive rebuff by black caucuses, toward which most women react with sadness and hopes of better relations and some with anger and counterrejection. Why this tension?

The tension arises not because sexism is irrelevant to black "manhood" but because it is all too

ROSEMARY RUETHER, a Contributing Editor, is Associate Professor of Historical Theology at Howard University's School of Theology. She is editor of the forthcoming book "Religion and Sexism: Images of Women in the Jewish and Christian Tradition."

uncomfortably relevant. However, this does not make black men male chauvinists in the same way as white men. Rather, the hostility springs from the humiliation of the black male at the hands of white males. The black (male) movement has been unable to sort out the way in which this humiliation has been not just racist but an interstructuring of racism and sexism.

A white Southern churchwoman recently sketched for me a model of the racist-sexist system of classical Southern society. It looked something like this:

White (elite) male

—over—

White (elite) female

—over—

Black female

—over—

X

In this system the white, upper-class male ruled supreme. He dominated a society divided by sex, class and race. Within the interface of sex and race, white females and black females were made the opposite sides of each other. The white woman was the dependent ornament in the parlor; the black woman was exploited for sex and work in the kitchen.

The black male was at the bottom, reduced to an asexual beast of burden, denied any self-affirmation through sexual identity. Marginalized as a human being, he was dependent not only on the white "massa" and "missus" but on his own woman as well. It is this unnameable humiliation that rankles behind the inability of the black (male) movement in America to deal with sexism—with either white or black women.

This situation has meant that the black church generally has played a different role in the sexual identity of the black minister than in that of the white minister. The white minister is often thrown into a confused posture toward his maleness. This is because white society considers religion and morality "feminine." It is a nice thing for women and children; it belongs in the private domestic sector; it has no place in the world of "real men" and should not get mixed up in business or politics. The virtues of Christianity are those of the "feminine": sweetness, passivity, private "feelings." The white minister is thrown into a threatened posture toward the women's movement because in white culture his own "manliness" is in doubt.

The black church has functioned in the opposite way. It was the one institution run and owned by



Christianity and Crisis

A Christian Journal of Opinion

537 West 121st Street / New York / New York 10027

JOHN C. BENNETT / Senior Contributing Editor

Contributing Editors:

FRANK BALDWIN
ROBERT McAFEE BROWN
JAMES H. CONE
HARVEY G. COX
JOHN R. FRY
JAMES R. MCGRAW
MARGARET MEAD
HOWARD MOODY
MICHAEL NOVAK
ROSEMARY RUETHER
ROGER L. SHINN
WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW

Staff:

WAYNE H. COWAN / Editor
VIVIAN LINDERMAYER / Associate Editor
VIRGINIA SIXEAS, SND / Assistant Editor
A. ROBERT FREELEY / Promotion Director
WILLIAM P. MORGAN / Circulation
KENNETH SEHESTED / Student Intern

Contents:

	page
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT REVISITED / Howard Moody	66
CRISIS IN SEX AND RACE: BLACK THEOLOGY vs. FEMINIST THEOLOGY / Rosemary Ruether	67
THE MIDDLE CLASS: UNMASKING THE AMERICAN MYTH / John C. Raines	73
THEOLOGICAL STREAKING / Saint Hereticus	78
CORRESPONDENCE /	79

Credits:

cover and design by Anne Gayler

Christianity and Crisis, Vol. 34, No. 6, April 15, 1974

Published biweekly for 24 consecutive issues, beginning the third Monday in September, by Christianity and Crisis, Inc., 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027. Subscription price: Canada and U.S., \$9.00; add \$1.00 for foreign postage; students \$7.00. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Please send POD form 3579 to Christianity and Crisis, 537 W. 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027. Copyright © 1974 Christianity and Crisis, Inc.

the black community. It was their one place of public, corporate self-affirmation, the seedbed of whatever training was available for black politics and organizational development. In a society where black maleness was marginalized and placed under constant threat of "castration" (literally as well as figuratively) by the dominant sexist-racist society, the black minister became the one true "man" of the black community, the surrogate patriarch for a scorned manliness.

Even if everywhere else the black family was disjointed, in the church father was clearly on top and mother was in the kitchen cooking the chicken. Functioning as a compensatory patriarchal figure for the whole community, the minister often became superpatriarchal, a symbol of pride for his people to whom they could transfer the privileges denied to them.

Black women have recently tried to challenge the tendency to make them the victims of this development of black manliness. They have tried to suggest that the strength of the black woman under oppression should be regarded with pride, not humiliation, as a part of the black experience. They have suggested that this strength makes possible an alternate paradigm for black male-female relations: They need not be patterned after white male dominance but can be truly reciprocal and mutually enhancing. They declare their full solidarity with the development of black manhood, but they protest a covert insistence that they walk ten paces behind in order to give the illusion that the black man is walking ten paces ahead. This is a delusory form of manliness that fails to appreciate and build upon the true possibilities of the experience of the black family that remained strong under the experience of oppression.

In the writings of black women one glimpses their fundamental experience of functioning as the "reality principle" for the entire race. They not only upheld the economic viability of the family unit, giving strength to the new generation, but also bore the ego frustration of the black man. This experience grows the more bitter when the black woman finds herself rejected precisely at the moment when she feels compelled to reject the "feminine" role in order to assert her truthful character as the "reality principle."

The black man, in turn, is constantly pulled after the white woman, who represents the illusory "feminine" and the forbidden fruits of sexual dominance. No wonder these groups are constantly tempted to turn on each other—the black man blaming the black woman, the black woman blam-

ing the white woman, the white woman retreating in a hurt alienation that could change into a racist reaction—instead of recognizing that despite their outwardly different conditions they share a common victimization under the superstructure of white patriarchy.

Black Theology: Middle Class?

In addition to representing the aspiration of the black community for "manliness," the black church has also been the traditional path toward the *embourgeoisement* of the black community. Consequently, it also has had the tendency to lose contact with the actual condition of the masses and become an enclave of "respectability," alienated and threatened by the chaotic conditions of the impoverished blacks, especially in the Northern city. The black masses, therefore, have often turned toward cultic and even anti-Christian movements to express their own experience of oppression. They have vilified the black minister—respected as the "proper" spokesman for the black community by whites—as a "crook" and an Uncle Tom.

The lower class has developed its own ways of affirming its different experience of sexuality. It is more comfortable with the nonbourgeois family patterns so deplored by Patrick Moynihan. This pattern is incorrectly described as "matriarchy," since the woman is hardly "dominant" in the usual sense of that word. But there is an autonomy and reciprocity quite different from the standard bourgeois model. Ultimately it is the woman who stands firm. She is the "ground of being" of the people in a way that finds its ambivalent celebration. Even as she is derided for her "lip," it is this toughness and realism that is the foundation of black survival. "Motherfucker" is a constant taunt, because it is also the most serious insult possible.

On the portico of the main auditorium at Howard University there is a gigantic mural of black history that consists of four male and two female figures. The males are Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and an anonymous rebel slave. The first three are posed in rhetorical stances, talking, while the fourth pulls the chain from his back. The females, Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, are shown in fighting stances, pulling the chains off their people and carrying guns. They are depicted as participating militantly in the liberation of their people. I know of no other group in America that could—and would be willing to—show the women of its history in this fashion.

The tension between black churchmen and the women's movement, then, seems to represent the defensive perspective of the black, middle-class, patriarchal church. It concentrates on confronting the racism of its counterparts in the white church. But it has not yet opened itself up to the disturbing countertrends in the lower-class black community that not only conflict with bourgeois male and female stereotypes but also are alienated from middle-class values and the Christian identity as well.

The Limits of "Black Caucus Theology"

These remarks do not discredit the validity of the theology being done by Cone in a particular context. His theology is an effective and appropriate instrument for its primary task. I would call this "black caucus theology." By this I mean that it is shaped to function in a confrontational fashion within a white power base. It places demands of conscience on white power and seeks to appropriate its advantages for the training of black leadership. But contrary to what Cone himself often declares, I think his kind of theology primarily addresses *white* people. Its content originally was little penetrated by the spirit of the black experience as an alternate source of theological themes. Its substance was taken from German dialectical theology, something Cone has continually defended as appropriate. He has essentially turned white theology upside down in order to reveal its hidden racist ideology. This is a valid and authentically prophetic use of theology within these social limits.

Cone's prophetic reversal of white theology remains too vaguely "universalist" for the concrete tasks of a radical black church. He spends much time justifying the idea that a white person may become "black" in a moral sense. He accepts an empty and negative definition of "blackness." Defining it essentially as "the oppressed," he gives little suggestion of what blackness might mean as an alternative culture in its own right. His recent book, *The Spirituals and the Blues*, has begun to correct this.

I believe that Cone's theology is appropriate for the task of confronting white power in the black caucus situation. However, it may be inadequate for the integral self-development of the black community itself, i.e. as black theology for black people. As a white middle-class female I presume no superior knowledge of blackness. But as a teacher at the Howard School of Religion, I simply suggest something rather evident from the different *sitz-im-leben* of the black seminary in the black church and

community, which has a much fuller reality than what appears to whites in the special psychology of the black caucus in the white institution.

The black community needs the transfer of power and skills from white institutions. Black caucuses have an important role here. What is still not evident is whether this power and these skills will really be transferred. One wonders whether black caucuses are not being led in the centrifugal path of the black middle class in militant disguise. The new willingness of white society to promote the skilled black person to full citizenship creates the possibility of disenfranchising this leadership group from the poor black community. We are beguiled into thinking that racism is overcome because a small elite gains new visibility and honor. We are prevented from seeing that the black masses in the ghettos are experiencing a worsening condition that they can no longer tolerate.

A relevant black church must perhaps become far more integrally black if it is to address itself to this situation. It must transform itself to overcome the split between the bourgeois black church and the unchurched black masses. It must become more like the Black Muslims or the Garveyite movements in the sense of focusing on building communal structures of social cooperation by and for blacks within the black community itself. It must take the initiative, in a vast movement of new morale, in transferring resources from white society and building resources from within the black community to transform the "ghetto" from a place of deprivation to a place of positive black communal expression and development.

The symbols that the black church inherited from evangelical Christianity may be too limited for this task. It may have to reach much more toward "soul," toward symbols developed by blacks alienated from the church, and also towards the Caribbean and Africa to find a "blackness" that is not simply anti-white but can rejoice in itself. Perhaps only Mother Africa can provide some symbols that the uprooted, stolen people cannot derive from the land of slavery: symbols for the soul-self, for the goodness of the body-self, for the integration of humankind in nature, the rootedness of peoplehood in the land.

Feminist Theology: Elitist?

The development of women's caucuses in seminaries and feminist theology, parallel to that of the black movement, is a phenomenon of the last few years. However, already there is evidence that wo-

men's caucuses may be creating a social encapsulation similar to that of black caucuses. This encapsulation, moreover, has social roots in the history of white feminism in America.

The women's movement in America arose in the 1830's among Southern elite and New England Brahmin women turned abolitionists. Its concept of the oppression of women was fueled by its sympathy with the antislavery cause. When the 14th Amendment enfranchised the black male and excluded women—using the word “male” as a description of citizenship for the first time in American constitutional tradition (previously the “generic” term “man” was used)—the more militant thought the amendment should be rejected until it included both race and sex. Thereafter they acquiesced in the increasing drift of the women's movement away from equalitarian views toward a racist and class bias.

As the women's movement became a mass movement in the 1880's, it was influenced by the general abandonment of romantic heroic reformism for a racist social Darwinism. Even the Social Gospel movement, strong in preaching against the exploitation of labor, acquiesced to the leading scientific dogma of Negro inferiority and never overcame its bourgeois paternalistic concept of the reformer as an expression of *noblesse oblige*. Increasingly the movement drifted toward a view that women should be enfranchised in order to double the vote of the white, Protestant, middle class and thereby assure the supremacy of this ruling class over the rising tide of blacks and immigrant Catholics and Jews. It thereby also took for granted the de facto reversal of the 14th Amendment in the Jim Crow laws.

At the same time the women's movement backed away from its earlier radical confrontation with the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity and the place of the woman in the home. Instead it accepted the stereotype of the feminine “lady,” whose beneficent role in the home should now shine forth into the public arena.

The new women's movement of the 1960's also arose out of an alliance with and, then, a traumatic experience of rejection by the black civil rights and white male radical movements. It has typically sought to go beyond the limits of the old women's movement and to challenge the stereotypes of the feminine and the sexual relations of male and female in home and society. It seems little disposed, therefore, to fall for a new version of the “white lady” myth. Yet its alienation from other radical movements, especially black liberation, and its recourse to a kind of “separatist” ideology—that talks

about the oppression of women as more basic than any other form of oppression in a way that makes women a separate cause unrelated to other kinds of oppression—may be working its own kind of subtle social encapsulation.

This separatist concept helps to obscure the way in which the oppression of women is structurally integrated with that of class and race. Sociologically, women are a sexual caste within every class and race. They share a common condition of women: dependency, secondary existence, domestic labor, sexual exploitation and the projection of their role in procreation into a total definition of their existence.

But this common condition takes profoundly different forms as women are divided against each



other by class and race. No woman of an oppressed class and race, therefore, can separate her female struggle from its context in the liberation of her own community. It is impossible for a black woman to join a women's movement that ignores racial oppression, however much she may want to lead the black movement beyond patriarchy.

Women of the elite class and race easily fall into an abstract analysis of women's oppressed status that they believe will unite *all* women. They ignore their own context of class and race privilege. Their movement fails to connect with women of oppressed groups, and it becomes defined by a demand for “rights” commensurate with the males of their group, oblivious to the unjust racist and class context of these privileges. It may not be wrong to seek such “equality,” but it is dangerous to allow the ideology of the women's movement to remain confined to this perspective.

Feminist Theology: Anti-female?

Theology done in the context of women's caucuses in elite universities tends also to be alienated from the *experience* of most women. Motherhood is a negative trip, and the chief ethical word one has to say about it is "abortion." Abortion is a necessary evil at this time, which I wish all women to have available to them if they need it. The elite woman, who competes with the career pattern of the elite male, is subverted at the point of her capacity to have children. She is usually forced to choose between the two. Absolutized, however, this perspective on motherhood really accepts the "phallic morality" (to use Mary Daly's phrase) that women have decried. It accepts a feminist anti-femaleness that loathes women at the point of the specificity of female difference.

Maternity has been the root of female oppression because it represents the one power that men do not have and upon which all men depend for their existence. Not to be able to rescue maternity as a positive symbol for women in a way that can be liberating is really a capitulation to the male false consciousness that tries to convert female potency into the female weakness through which women are subjugated. Sexism cannot be understood, historically or psychologically, unless it is recognized that it rests not on female weakness but on the suppression of female power. Sexism is an elaborate system of handicaps that males erect around women to make female potency appear to be the point of their weakness and dependency, thereby suppressing from cultural consciousness the truth of male dependency. Women who strive for an equality by accepting this male negation of the female remain encapsulated in male false consciousness.

As all early mythology shows, our fundamental images of ontology draw on maternity as a biological fact of all our existence. Fathering is essentially external, while the origin of each of us in the mother's womb is the fundamental anthropological-existential basis of language about ground and substance. Hence, the first power on earth was "Mother Power"—ontologically, if not politically. In suppressing Mother Power women must recognize themselves as cooperators from the first. The fact is that women almost never take advantage of their own power for political domination. Even neurotic "momism" is really a creation of male chauvinism, which squeezes women's power into a confined space. But the fundamental mothering function is one that seeks to build up the auto-

nomous existence of men and children—even at her own expense. Sexism arises at the point where men take advantage of this nurturing function to refuse reciprocity and erect a political structure of dependency that vaunts the male as a priori and transcendent, thereby denying his real foundations in Mother Power.

If women must unmask these false superstructures today, it cannot be in a way that betrays the life-building aspect of female life for an adoption of misogyny. Rather, women's liberation will only gain general support from women when it can be revealed as a necessity that also expresses the mandate of the woman as the foundation of the survival of the race. Male false consciousness has created an antagonistic concept of self and social and ecological relations that is rapidly destroying mankind and the earth. Not only have the personhood and cultural gifts of women been suppressed by this, but males themselves have been allowed to remain in an adolescent form of vainglorious psychology that is no longer compatible with human survival.

Women must reject male chauvinism at the point of the oppression of their own personhood and autonomy. But they must also reject it at the point of motherhood for the sake of the survival of their children. It is at this point that the dialogue between white feminism and black feminism is vital. White feminism easily capitulates to a female version of male misogynist psychology. Only the experience of black women can unmask what is suppressed beneath this pretense of the "natural superiority of the male" and show its real roots. Black women inevitably ground a militant feminism not only in their liberation as persons but also in the validation of woman as mother, fighting for the survival of her children. Their experience reveals what patriarchal mythology conceals: The first power is Mother Power, and patriarchy arises by suppressing and concealing this grounding of the male in the female.

The history of white male chauvinism, with its interstructuring of sexism and racism, is bent on alienating black women and white women and making their contrary experiences incommunicable to each other. When black and white women can penetrate each other's experience and recognize each other as common victims of a total structure of white male domination, this will be the moral victory that will cut the gordian knot of white male dominance. An independent black feminism that can articulate the distinctive character of the black female experience in a way that can reveal this total structure of oppression, then, is the essential

element that is needed to cut through the mystifications of white male power that set the three subordinate groups against each other.

Perhaps only black feminism can give us a strong image of womanhood before patriarchy reduced it to shattered fragments. The white patriarchal God has alienated us from our bodies, each other and the earth. The black patriarchal God is prophetic on the side of the oppressed. He represents the transcendent Almighty who assures the weak that there is a power in heaven stronger than the mighty on earth. But absolutized, he promises more apocalyptic warfare in reverse. The white lady of Mariology always lands woman on her knees before

her "divine Son" as the sublimated, and the sexually alienated, servant of the male ego.

One needs to glimpse again the primordial power of the mother-symbol as Ground of Being to restore an ontological foundation to the "wholly other" God of patriarchy. The Christian effort to overcome gnosticism and apocalypticism and to integrate the God of the messianic future with the divine Ground of Being failed because it continued to be based on the patriarchal denigration of the female. Only a regrounding of the power of the future within the power of the primordial matrix can refund the lost covenant of man with nature and give us a theology for the redemption of the earth. □

the middle class: — unmasking the american myth

john c. raines

I AM INTERESTED in the living situation of average, middle-class Americans. I mean those whose family income falls between \$11,000 and \$15,000 a year. Actually, that is slightly above the statistically average family, which today is located at the lower end of that continuum. Still, the \$11,000-\$15,000 group is the one to which most poorer Americans aspire and the bracket within which American amenities like "affluence" and "upward mobility" are thought to take hold—together with standard putdowns of the middle class like "consumerism" and "excessive materialism."

Actually, neither the amenities nor the putdowns describe what is really going on there—which is instead a combination of end-of-the-month desperation and misplaced gratitude. For we live in a society that is steeply unequal, where most of the effective (i.e. discretionary) wealth and, therefore, power is frozen at the top. Yet this reality is disguised as right, good and only natural by the myth of freedom of opportunity. Everyone supposedly "gets his fair chance," and so no one has a right to complain.

Curiously, this myth buttresses itself upon the idea of free and universal education. I say "curi-

ously" because what education has shown itself best at, and statistically does most massively, is *failing people* at status accomplishment—three A's, 15 B's, 25 C's and so on. And an education in failure is less an education in freedom of opportunity than a tutoring in self-accusation and the consequent inwardizing of protest.

Put simply, "*affluence*," "*upward mobility*" and "*freedom of opportunity*" are American myths that *disguise rather than reveal American realities*.

Let me begin by briefly analyzing the American system of deference and how it gathers us into its dreams. For if I am right, America works not as a reality but as a dream of reality.

"What do you do?" is a key part of opening rituals at parties where strangers meet and try to interact. It is a question central to the production of a well-performed conviviality, because the answer to it maps in the system of deference. It tells us how to approach each other in mutually anticipated ways—to play the same play.

"What do you do?" registers accomplishment in gaining pecuniary advantage. There is a special structure for "professionals." (Medical doctors, for example, require more deference than teachers; and among the former—at least in upper-middle-class society—psychiatrists require more prestige-recognition gestures than internists.) Ministers, priests and rabbis form a separate category. They are, to say

JOHN C. RAINES teaches religion at Temple University. He is the author of "Attack on Privacy" and editor of "Conspiracy: The Implications of the Harrisburg Trial for the Democratic Tradition." His article on "Privacy and Community: Reflections on Freedom in America" appeared in our December 25, 1972 issue.

it frankly, something of an embarrassment.

So far we have been speaking about the rites of male association. The system is obviously different for females. The talk among females mapping their way through the social landscape of a cocktail party is likely to turn to husbands and children.

This system of deference—husbands, kids, competent housewife, mother, etc.—plays an integral role in the commercial system's attempts to manage women as buyers. We may take a lesson from *Redbook*. I have in mind an advertisement for Sealy mattresses that appeared there recently.

It is a full-page ad, most of it a lovely pastel picture showing a wife, a husband and a child. The wife is young and beautiful, the husband handsome and, from the evidence of their casual but expensive-looking clothing, a good provider. The child is a boy, and he's riding on his father's shoulders. They're all in a park, playing. The boy has a balloon and is smiling.

The ad gets interesting when you begin to follow the eyes. Who's watching whom? Where is the center, the source of security? Father is looking at son on his shoulders, and he's smiling. Wife is watching husband watch son who's watching father, and she's smiling. The inner workings of the advertising ploy come home—literally. Happy home and happy family are her competence (and judgment), her security, her place in reality. The rest of the ad now begins to make sense. In a small frame—placed above *her* head—is a picture of a Sealy mattress (one of her testing places) with a woman (beautiful) relaxed and asleep. "Sealy," says the ad, "promises you a good night and a good day."

Now if a woman decides to look back at all this looking (think of how the ad changes if husband and son watch her, the centered-one, who from her inside moves back upon the outside)—well, she stands the chance of simply falling off the edge of the world. She becomes unavailable to the marketplace, refuses established deference. More likely these days she seeks her independence by taking a job. Unfortunately, that's not likely to get her much further than it got him—"What do you do?" etc.

It is interesting to note how many wives—especially from our kind of families—are going back to work. It may be middle-class liberation, but it is increasingly also a middle-class necessity. The reason has already appeared. It has to do with that mapping-word, that social definition called "*middle class*."

What Does "Middle" Mean?

A class that calls itself "middle" has already made several interesting statements about itself. It has said, for example, that its social reality is as an "in-between": namely, it is in-between those ahead whom it envies and emulates and those behind (blacks, ethnics, Jews—in the ascending ladder of status) whom it fears and flees from. It is the politics of voting constantly above the place where you are. Why above?

Because "middle" becomes valuable, a significant place to be, only as it becomes something ever above itself (or at least appears to itself that way)—viz., as it is upwardly mobile. And in a land of "freedom of opportunity" if you're not moving up, then there's only one place to put the blame—on yourself. You can see how it consolidates the system—fearing and resenting those behind and humbling ourselves before those above.

Take the fact that I teach at Temple University. To speak with a cold and objective eye, the function of Temple in the social ecology of Philadelphia is to produce, as it were, certified public accountants. It is to manufacture those who will loyally *work for*, and for less money than, those who graduated, let us say, from Yale.

After all my Temple students had, as is said, their chance. They took their scholastic aptitude test, and it answered back "not Yale." Result?—no grounds for later complaint. Since this particular sorting system seems somewhat sovereign (inherited wealth is more sovereign) in this land of opportunity, I find it a marvelously honest statement that the testing service should be located in Princeton, N.J.

Back to the "middle" and how they're "moving up." Are they?

The figures indicate that the statistically average family between 1961 and 1971 increased its actual purchasing power (after taxes and inflation) by \$1,610 per year. We won't talk about the rate of inflation since 1971. (This past year the wholesale price index went up by what even an Administration official called an "unbelievable" 17.5 percent.) This additional \$1,610 amounted to about \$135 per month or \$33 a week—to show for ten years of work. Up?

Meanwhile what's been happening in the wider society around that family? We may take just one typical instance—the move to the suburbs by Mr. Middle. Let us follow a family that used to live in South Philadelphia—an Italian neighborhood of two- and three-story row houses. Making it in

America has increasingly meant making it out of the city and into the suburbs. If you don't believe me just look at the scene outside those windows in *Redbook* advertisements: green trees, not sidewalks.

In this move our family left behind a three-to six-bedroom row house (basement finished over the years and panelled) mostly or wholly paid for and bought originally for \$7,000. They sold it for \$10,000, which they used as a down-payment on a \$30,000 suburban home (maximum three bedrooms) with a dishwasher and their own tree outside the window. That means a \$20,000 mortgage added to the family budget. (We shall not discuss whether they now have more or less square-footage of living space.) In turn this necessitates that over the 25-year life of their mortgage they will have to pay back a total of \$60,000 (average). In one stroke the family has added \$165 to their monthly budget—i.e. more than their total ten-year monthly increase. Besides, they have had to purchase a second car for father to get to work at a monthly cost (conservatively estimated) of \$90 with installment payments, gasoline and insurance.

There can be no doubt about it. It's the end-of-the-month blues for this family.

"Well, the wife can go to work. And besides, we did it for the kids; so they could get a good education, go to college and beat the system."

Wage Earners and Wealth Owners

Does it work? More about higher education, how it's financed, and where it takes us in a moment. First we must look at what has been going on in the overall wealth statistics of our society—that authoritative distributor of deference—while Mr. Middle has been "moving up" into the suburbs.

In 1774, among the minority of Philadelphians affluent enough to pay taxes, ten percent owned fully 89 percent of the taxable property. In 1972, according to a University of Michigan survey, the top ten percent of our nation owned 56 percent of all wealth, with the top .5 percent (note it well!) owning fully half of that 56 percent. Compared to 1774 it is a kind of improvement, I suppose, though hardly enough to write home about.

But be careful. Remember Mr. Middle and his second car and newly acquired big mortgage. His \$30,000 house and his two cars all get factored into that "wealth" figure. But not the newly working wife, or his second job, or his arguments with the kids over money, or his persistent exhaustion and bewildered wondering why it's not better for him after all these years of "upward mobility."

Here we must introduce a key distinction between income-producing wealth and those financially static amenities that nevertheless get counted as "wealth" in economic surveys and Gross National Product figures.

Looking to wealth-producing wealth, we find a startling scene—startling that is for a land of "freedom of opportunity." In a landmark study in 1953 the economist R. J. Lampman found that more than 30 percent of the assets and equities in our society were held by the top 1.6 percent of our population (with another 20 percent held by Government). This top 1.6 percent, for example, held all state and local bonds (tax exempt) and 82 percent of all corporate stocks (capital gains taxed at 50 percent of their value).

That leaves the rest of us (98.4 percent) to share the remaining 50 percent of the total personal wealth, "wealth" that is for the most part fully exposed to taxation: houses, cars, wages, cash reserves, etc. One proviso here: Mr. Middle does get a tax break with the interest write-off on his mortgage. But with continuing inflation, the percentage of us who can afford to own homes—now estimated by a congressional report at less than 40 percent—seems anything but promising.

The overall fact remains as the Joint Committee

AUTHORS
your book should be
published now

If your manuscript contains knowledge or observations that should be shared with others, we want to publish it. Your book will get professional editing, first-rate design and production, plus expert promotion and distribution. You are invited to send your fiction, nonfiction or poetry manuscript for prompt review and terms of publication, or you may ask for our free *Authors' Guide to Publication*.

DORRANCE & CO. • Book Publishers Since 1920
Dept. W, 1617 J. F. K. Blvd., Phila., Pa. 19103

on the Economic Report (84th Congress, 1st session 1955) has said. While 95 percent of income from wages and salaries is taxed, taxes are actually collected on only 67 percent of taxable income from interest, dividends and fiduciary investments, and on only about 36 percent of taxable farm income.

Perhaps, as one of my undergraduate students suggested, we should refer to ourselves (more accurately and revealingly) not as a middle-class society but as a country of wage earners and wealth owners, with little mobility between.

Is this a picture of expanding affluence, of average Americans moving up? Or is it a picture of the middle class moving up against the wall and taking their kids with them? Peter Barnes puts it well I think (in *The New Republic*, Sept. 30, 1972): "The Great GNP Machine has been moderately successful in distributing what might be called inert wealth—homes, automobiles, personal property—while far from producing income is a drain on the sturdiest pocketbook."

Nevertheless, we persist in calling ourselves "middle," dream of "moving up," and so vote above ourselves while being furious at those who "freeload" behind. It is, you can see, the established system of deference speaking in our speaking.

Thus we ratify our given existence—and go into debt. Item: the relationship of family income to family debt shows an increase in average indebtedness over 20 years ago of 100 percent, and that doesn't include mortgage indebtedness. We seem to be developing a new kind of "company store," with people locked into jobs by paychecks already locked into monthly credit payments.

Passing on the Wounds of Status

"But we're doing it for the kids, so they can get an education and get out of it all!"

Partly this hope works, but only partly. Looked at in one way, a college education is one of the better bets going. A college graduate earns an average of \$4,000 more per year over his lifetime than his high school counterpart. But this does not move him from the wage earner category over into wealth owner status. Moreover, there is another way to look at college. When you reckon that 60 percent of us now go on to some form of higher education while less than 15 percent graduate with a four-year degree, that's an awesome sight of "failure"—especially if you are a college teacher and must preside over it.

Some people answer: "They had their chance. It's their own fault."

This answer is curiously similar to one received by a recent research team studying working-class parents. It's the same system-directed anger deflected into self-accusation.

Put simply, the established system of deference depends upon a misplaced gratitude. It's like women getting hooked on *Redbook*. Whether it's Dr. Harris' runaway best-seller (*I'm O.K., You're O.K.*) pumping reassurance into middle-class suburbs or the blue-collar group studied by Sennett and Cobb in *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, the same background of shaky self-esteem shows through.

Sennett and Cobb found that working class persons often have two basic categories of self-interpretation by which they seek to make sense of their lives. One is self-accusation. They see themselves as failures and by their own fault (what else in a land of "freedom of opportunity"). "Look," said one of them, "it's nobody's fault but mine I got stuck where I did." The self completes its social defeat by directing its anger against itself. The second idea that grasped the workers was self-sacrifice. Many of these parents made sense out of what was happening to them on the grounds of "sacrificing" themselves for the kids. "We did it all for you" was a refrain echoing through the standard rituals of family discourse.

The psychological impact of this elemental ambivalence—"I'm a failure, but you should love me because I did it all for you"—passes the wounds of status on from one generation to the next.

The story told between parents and children in these families, and, I suspect in a good many middle-class homes, cripples rather than vitalizes the next generation. This is reflected in the relatively high incidence of authoritarian ways of raising kids. If Sennett and Cobb are right, many of the parents studied viewed themselves not as models to be followed but as warnings, lessons in failure.

Suspecting their own competence, they lacked fundamental and automatic trust in their offspring. Their kids weren't "born winners," but with careful watching and discipline they might be made into winners. As one worker put it, "I haven't got it up here; but my kids are smart; *I make 'em that way.*" Sadly but inevitably, the children pick up the hidden signal, the suspicion of mediocre endowment. Usually they don't even get to college, much less through it. But even if they do, there's an interesting process now well underway there. And that is the fact that their education, among other things, will probably be an education in indebtedness.

For educational administrators caught in the

squeeze between tight financial resources and skyrocketing institutional costs, the programs of deferred payment and Government-guaranteed student loans comes as a delightful out. They can raise tuition with a clear conscience—and, more to the point, without emptying their classrooms. But it's far from an "out" for the student.

He begins to pay back his debt after graduating. The interest rate on these loans is such that he is likely to have to return a third again as much as he actually paid. And what happens if he meets the girl of his heart at school, and she, like him, has a . . . ? Well, that's quite a financial merger.



Here is a young couple—having attained college educations in order to increase their analytical perspective upon society and to improve job *mobility* and freedom of life style *choice*—starting their marriage in debt to the tune of, shall we say, \$6,000 (according to recent HEW statistics, a conservative estimate). They need a car. They need furniture, appliances, rent for the apartment, and they would like to save a little for a down-payment on a house. So she goes to work; and they put off having kids for a while. (How long?) Recent birth statistics, which are falling off sharply for this group, indicate concern not so much for population growth as for minimal family solvency. The same may well be true for the emerging "two-child" family ideal. It's an ideal that lets mother go back to work earlier.

Is this a passage by means of education into freedom? Locked into jobs a big chunk of whose paycheck is already taken each month in installment payments, our couple is taught not so much freedom as a premature gratitude. Strapped by monthly strain, they easily become cowed by the given system of deference, with its precarious ladder leading upwards toward (someday) the light. After all, "Be quiet and stay in your place" is what education has traditionally taught us.

Conclusion: In order to be freeing, education may well need to be free, or at least not so burdensome as to incur deep and early indebtedness.

Housewives, mothers, workers and average suburban Americans—haunted as we are by a misplaced deference—where do we go?

This question was posed in a letter from a young man in response to an article of mine on the plight of the middle class. He said in part:

I read your article . . . and am in full agreement with it. I feel that the most important point you make concerns the well-being of the family unit. As a secondary school teacher I can tell you that the great majority of discipline problems are found in families having both parents working. I have discovered cases where both parents hold more than one job . . . I myself am faced with this problem. In buying a single family home in New Jersey, I have burdened the family budget to such an extent that I will need two part-time jobs to stave off actual poverty. The question then is, what is to be done? Political action is useless. The Republicans are preoccupied with aiding big business and the Democrats with the lower class . . . What is your answer?

There's the problem, in those last two lines. With one party for the rich and the other for the poor (??), there's no place politically, the author thinks, for middle-class people like him to go. And there are millions like him.

What can be done? We can start by disabusing ourselves of misplaced titles. We are not so much "middle" as we are *wage earners* in a system of deference set up to service *wealth owners*. Our natural allies—the 75 percent of us making less than \$15,000 a year—are those running the stampede alongside and behind us. We have, indeed, a welfare state. But the people heaviest into the public dole are the wealthy few at the top—who each year receive \$77 billion in special tax breaks while the rest of us do the rugged individualism thing, even at \$20,000 and \$25,000. For in terms of statistical averages only those with an income above \$30,000 can begin to get their income shifted from the heavily taxed wage and salary category over into the tax-sheltered property and interest category.

"Freedom of Opportunity," having an equal chance—despite Princeton, N.J.—these are not present realities with which to berate ourselves but fine and decent *contradictions* in the given American game. There is a politics out there all right, the politics of our country's original promises. But we must be careful where we cast our deferences. What we need is the politics of a more equal and open society, a "new deal" for all us average "middle" Americans—black and white, ghetto and suburb together. □



Saint Hereticus

THEOLOGICAL STREAKING

STREAKING has not only hit college campuses; Even the hard hats—traditional enemies of the students—have taken it up. Streaking can be defined as “getting down to bare facts” or “stripping away the nonessentials.” The true meaning of streaking, of course, is (like all things) theological: Streaking is the attempt by a sinful generation to reclaim the lost innocence of the idyllic paradise that was the Garden of Eden before the fall came along and made clothing a tragic necessity.

Theologians frequently engage in their own peculiar brand of streaking, even though they tend (after the manner of most theologians) to do it symbolically rather than literally. Only people as pure in heart as St. Francis engage in streaking that is both symbolic and literal. St. Francis, it will be remembered, when confronted by the stern word of the Gospel to forsake all possessions, promptly went to the public square in Assisi and did just that, divesting himself of every bit of clothing, retaining neither tennis shoes nor face mask. The episode perhaps points up a crucial difference between saints and theologians: Saints take the message literally; theologians take it symbolically. We can be pretty sure it never occurred to St. Francis to demythologize the command.

This is not a plea for theologians to become saints and engage in literal streaking. I am enough of a realist to have learned that theologians, whatever else they are, are never pure in heart. But I do think that streaking (one of “the signs of the times,” as Vatican II called them) can remind us of the kind of symbolic streaking that theologians always engage in as they try, in their own fashion, to strip away nonessentials.

The ontological argument is a case in point. Anselm of Canterbury dressed it up in extraordinary verbal finery long before it ever occurred to the theological streakers to get to work on it. The argument runs in part:

Even the fool must be convinced that a being than which none greater can be nor be conceived exists at least in his understanding, since when he hears this he understands it, and whatever is understood is in the understanding. But clearly that than which a greater cannot be nor be conceived cannot exist in the understanding alone. For if it is actually in the understanding alone, it can be thought of as existing also in reality, and this is greater. Therefore, if that than which a greater cannot be nor be conceived is in the understanding alone, this same thing than which a greater cannot be nor be conceived is that than which a greater can be or be conceived. But obviously this is impossible. Without doubt, therefore, there exists, both in the understanding and in reality, something than which a greater cannot be nor be conceived.

That, it must be conceded, is a well-dressed, if not over-dressed, bit of prose. And it took almost nine centuries before that theological-philosophical streaker *par excellence*, Lord Bertrand Russell, succeeded in stripping away all the nonessentials and giving us the ontological argument in its barest form. The argument runs in full: “Being is.”

Lord Russell had to engineer this stripping-away virtually barehanded since not many of his theological or philosophical predecessors had given him

TODAY'S PEOPLE WITH TODAY'S POSITIONS

James Armstrong relates modern messages of controversial men and women which include: “Charlie Chaplin and Modern Times,” “Angela Davis and Sin,” “Mohandas Gandhi and Power,” and “George McGovern and Defeat.” The contemporary realism of **WILDERNESS VOICES** provokes serious consideration of reform, compassion, and courage where it is needed most.
Paper, \$3.50

at your local bookstore
abingdon

much help in the simplification process. But there are other instances in which a more gradually achieved reduction took place. This time it is the Decalogue that is the case in point. We start out with ten commandments. And while the *Reader's Digest* has never gotten around to reducing the ten to perhaps "the four most popular commandments," we do discover that even by New Testament times the ten had been reduced to two and that the second was said to be the same as the first. And then, only shortly after the events described in the Gospels, we find Paul coming along and claiming that "the whole law is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Gal. 5:14). Augustine continues the process of reduction even further by making the commandments read, "Love God, and do as you please," variously reported also in an even more telling streaker form as "Love, and do as you please." And today both the orthodox and liberal theological streakers carry the process still further, reducing the commandments to either "Love God" or "Do as you please."

The Puritan tradition has been a particularly fertile field for subsequent theological streaking since few people have ever written longer treatises than the Puritans. When we ask, therefore, "What is a Puritan?" our answer is likely to take pages, as we involve ourselves in intricate descriptive accounts of guilt, justification, infralapsarianism, premillennialism, supralapsarianism and postmillennialism, followed by treatments of a stern and taxing deity making implacable demands even on those of his children whom he chooses not to damn eternally. And so on and so on, in *saecula saeculorum*. How grateful we latter-day sinners can be, therefore, to that iconoclastic streaker, the late H. L. Mencken, who chose to cut through all that, strip away the verbiage and get down to essentials, defining a Puritan as one obsessed with "the haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy."

Examples abound. Indeed (to co-opt a phrase made familiar in our times) it would be the *easy* way simply to multiply examples. The more important task, the harder task, is to ask: Where will it all end? Will streaking, both literal and symbolic, continue until all has been permanently reduced to its bare essentials?

I have a theory about this that applies to both literal and symbolic streaking. Before long (perhaps even before this has appeared in print), the novelty will have worn off. The fad will fade. The ongoing human craving for mystery will reassert itself. A new generation will rise up, fascinated on the one hand by the designing and wearing of clothes

and engaged on the other hand in the designing and wearing of elaborate theological speculation. It will not be long before we find people praying to a God than whom no greater can be nor be conceived, engaging in new and ever more elaborate midrashic elaborations of the love commandment and writing, Bunyan-style, their own 20th century equivalents of *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.

For if we cannot bear too much reality, we cannot bear to bare it either. □

Correspondence

Who Owns the Truth?

TO THE EDITOR: Myron B. Bloy's article ("The Biblical Challenge to the Academy," Feb. 18 issue) is an eloquent and courageous presentation of a vitally important subject. It comes to the reader as a product of meticulous study and demonstrates the zeal of a prophetic faith. . . .

However, there is danger in taking Bloy's words too seriously as *the* biblical challenge to the academy. On the one hand, he never states that this is his personal opinion. On the other hand, his North American Protestant ethical puritanism poses serious difficulties for the attempts to search for truth now being made cooperatively by the church and institutions of higher learning. He places the church in competition with the academy in the "old" struggle for the "ownership" of truth. Bloy seems to ignore the fact that truth does not belong to institutions. It is something that is discovered in the continuum of the learning process.

Bloy demonstrates an "innocent" and backward utopianism. Such utopianism romanticizes history. His concept of history loses reality and becomes the desire to change the negative elements of the past. Consequently, Bloy's view of the "new Exodus," speaking of New England, is highly romantic and untrue. His view of history suffers from a "Disneyland-itis" that, wishing to change certain "sad" realities, distorts history into a marvelous fiction. (At this point his views should be balanced against Jurgen Moltmann's preface in his book *Religion, Revolution and the Future*.)

It is difficult to ascertain whether Bloy is talking about ethics or philosophies of education. Actually, he mixes both disciplines. He talks about the "assumed" rightness of biblical processes and the wrongness of the "professionalization of the professorate, the fragmenting of knowledge into disciplines and the empowerment of graduate schools

as *the* shapers of academic culture," without realizing that neither the church nor the academy has unanimous theological interpretations or a consensus in educational philosophy.

Bloy ignores the fact that theology does not deal with philosophies of education. Education is a process of growth and thus becomes a theological question. But theology does not provide the answers for the problems of education. On the other hand, theology is intrinsically related to learning processes and, therefore, is an educational question. But education cannot solve theological problems. Consequently, theology does not determine philosophies of education, nor does education determine theological foundations. Both disciplines and their representing institutions need to be in constant dialogue . . .

Finally, Bloy appears to be caught between pragmatism and ontological analysis. He is wrestling with a pragmatic understanding of history and society that rejects ontological values. He attacks the ontological value of knowledge as "gnosticism," thus losing a valuable tool for the evaluation of education that provides an objective perspective *vis-à-vis* pragmatic implementation. He also uses ontological theological principles in order to judge pragmatic expressions of educational processes.

Even though certain elements of the article need serious consideration, the article itself should be regarded as Bloy's personal search for the meaning of truth within the realm of two institutions that form an important part of our society.

E. DANIEL STATELLO

United Ministries in Higher Education
Northridge, Calif.

—McCarthy and Wicker in C&C Soon—

MCCARTHY: "We should learn from Watergate . . . the severe lesson Charles Agee pointed out about that period in which it was the historical role of the Germans to reveal the mind of evil before it had the potential to realize all its objectives. Watergate [may be] a clear warning of where we have been going . . . , indicating the potential for danger, horror and abuse just short of the time in which those in power had the potential to realize their objectives."

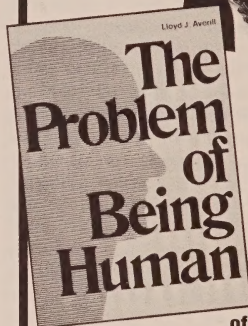
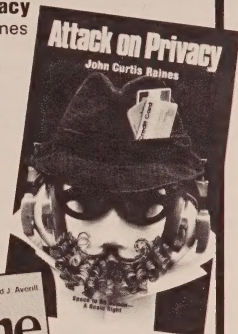
WICKER: "If there is evidence of political bankruptcy today, it exists in the liberal Democratic Party, which has had almost no political cerebration, innovation or ideas since the 1930's. I see no evidence that anyone preparing to run for President on the Democratic ticket in 1976 has a new approach to the politics of America."

"... who has the right to know what about us determines the freedom we are permitted to exercise in our everyday lives."

In this bold book Raines tells how electronic snooping threatens your privacy and calls for a revival of an inner spirit of independence to recapture the right of free choice. Hardbound, \$4.95

Attack on Privacy

John Curtis Raines



The Problem of Being Human

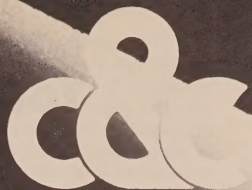
Lloyd J. Averill

"With all of man's knowledge and accomplishments, he still knows what it is to face a threatened and meaningless existence . . ." writes Averill in this book for serious students wanting to explore the meaning of human life. Discusses how living within the loving will of God enables a person to be human. Hardbound, \$7.95

At your local bookstore or send your order direct to:

JUDSON PRESS

Valley Forge, PA 19481.



Christianity and Crisis

Vol. 38, No. 16, October 30, 1978,
85 cents a copy

To the Presbyterians on Homosexuality:
**You Spoke
From Ignorance**
Calvin Gay

1078
SOCIAL CONCERNS WORK AREA
MATHERSON ST U METH CHURCH
134 MATHEMSCN ST
PROVIDENCE RI
02903

036297C

**Apartheid and Slavery:
Some Parallels**

Henry Bucher

**A Novelist Who's Fair
to Fundamentalists**

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott

Lutinger

To the Presbyterians on Homosexuality: You Spoke From Ignorance

Calvin Gay

Though this article covers ground already somewhat familiar to most C&C readers, it gives vivid expression to a perspective not previously presented here—that of a “closeted” homosexual minister who believes he cannot disclose his sexual orientation without loss of his present employment and future employability. The article responds to the call for continuing dialogue on homosexuality that formed part of a statement adopted last May by the General Convention of the United Presbyterian Church. As the article discloses, actually initiating that dialogue through the public media presents difficulties; C&C therefore feels a responsibility to help make it happen. “Calvin Gay” is, of course, a pseudonym.

A SUDDEN DOWNPOUR had forced the wedding to be moved inside. While we waited for the bridesmaids to dry their hair, the groom knelt beside the sofa where I sat, boning up on the service I was about to perform.

“I read what the Presbyterians did in San Diego last week,” he said apprehensively. “Will that have any effect on what we do here this morning? I mean—well, will we still be legally married?”

Taylor knew what most Presbyterians don’t seem to know: that there are gay Presbyterian Ministers. In fact—and it was this that brought about his anxiety—he knew something even fewer Presbyterians know: that I am one of them.

Most of the discussion has been carried on as though the church were deciding whether it will have homosexual clergy and officers. This is naive. The General Assembly statement itself alleges that between 5 and 10 percent of the human population is homosexual in orientation. And Presbyterian ministers are human, are they not? My own guess is that the number of homosexually oriented ministers is near the top of the spread, while because of the moralism within the church the number practicing their homosexuality is nearer the minimum figure. The fact that you may not know any gay Presbyterian minister doesn’t mean the figures are wrong; with rare exceptions, we do not dare reveal our identities even to one another.

The General Assembly recognized that there would be some members offended by its policy statement. It also called for continuing dialogue within the church.

I wish to take advantage of that invitation by speaking directly to all my Presbyterian brothers and sisters for whom the San Diego statement speaks when it takes the position that no unrepentant homosexual should be ordained:

Yes, I am offended. I am offended because in the statement you who are its supporters are taking a definitive position on something you know almost nothing about. You lump homosexual practice with such sins as pride and greed. Very well; but pride and greed are something we all have some familiarity with, while I see no evidence in the statement that you have learned much about homosexuality, either from report or from experience. And that makes it all too easy simply to judge all homosexuality as sin.

As a further consequence of your lack of knowledge, you are glib about suggesting remedies for others. We will be accepted as first-class members of the church if we either manage to redirect our sexual desires and get married to prove it, or remain celibate, in which case it does not matter whether we are heterosexual or homosexual.

Have you ever tried to change your sexual orientation? How successful have you been in following a celibate life style? How would you feel if someone told you you must do one or the other in order to qualify to become a deacon, elder or minister in the United Presbyterian Church? The questions seem in order because there is a rather famous piece of advice in the Bible—which you who support the statement claim as your authority—to the effect that what you wouldn’t want others to do to you, you shouldn’t do to them.

I think I know what your reply will be: that the expression of sexuality you recommend is authentic, and mine is inauthentic (read: sinful). What makes a sex act authentic? All I can say is that for me to try to have sex with a woman would be one of the most insincere acts I can imagine, while those I have had with men—all too few—have been tender, self-giving, ennobling. I can’t ask you to try it, but I can ask you to listen respectfully to those of us who are in a position to know what you cannot.

You are cruelly misleading when without adducing any evidence at all you lead people to think that the

homosexual has the easy option of flipping over to heterosexuality. Match this against my experience: I have been to many kinds of therapists, including some Presbyterian ministers who were splendid counselors, but all of them were as powerless to change a person's sexual orientation as you or I would be.

Morality or Masochism?

As to your alternative recommendation, celibacy, I followed that for 45 years and found it to be not authentic, but neurotic in ways that are deeply un-Christian. This exalted status you give to involuntary celibacy is the most frightful mistake you have made in your policy statement. It happens to be the point to which my own experience speaks most clearly. To show that, I will need to tell you about my life in some detail. I realize that some readers will find some passages of my account distasteful, even shocking. These are the very readers I most want to reach, and I ask them to think hard about their own responses. It is precisely because they have not shared my experience that they need to try to understand it.

From the time I began to feel sexual urges at about the age of 10, they were all toward men. For a while I thought maybe my feelings would change as I grew older. But they didn't. I was secretly in love with Ron all through junior high and high school. I would watch him by the hour, but seldom spoke to him: I knew I was not worthy of that. We were both nominated for president of the freshman class, but I withdrew in his favor. Although I had the highest grades in the class, I knew my awful secret unfitted me for such an honor. "Later," I said, "when I am readier." I meant when I had managed to "reorient" myself.

I had never heard the word "homosexual." Why would there be a word for it when I was the only person in the world who had it? I went to church; I prayed; I made out programs for self-improvement ("Read the sport page every day, avoid feminine gestures, prefer the company of men," etc.), and I followed them. I even quit masturbating for several years and lived a totally celibate life. None of it worked. What I succeeded in repressing from my conscious mind came out in dreams. My first explicit knowledge of how two men can relate sexually came to me in a dream—so vivid I still remember the details.

There is little in your policy statement that speaks to those miserably unhappy years of my youth. You don't want the church to set before the world the example of homosexuals in places of leadership. But let me tell you something: If there had been one self-affirming homosexual minister or teacher in my community, whether "practicing" or not, I would have been spared all that misery. I have heard countless

other gay persons give similar testimony.

I was 20 before I ever shared my secret with anyone. By then the pattern was established of developing torrid crushes on heterosexual men, usually unknown to them. This soaked up a tremendous amount of emotional energy on causes that were predestined to failure. It was a perfect recipe for a masochistic neurosis, as my analyst later helped me to see. But the analyst, like you who are speaking through the statement, could not draw the obvious consequence: "This is your nature. Why not begin to live it?"

I was convinced that I had failed miserably in not becoming a proper man according to the jock model that was the only one presented to me. When I resumed masturbation at the age of 23, masochism was reinforced. Because the morality I had been taught did not allow me even to fantasize the sharing of sex in a loving way with another male, I built fantasies in which I was punished by "proper" males, and I learned to get sexual pleasure from this punishment.

I speak sadly to you who have given us this statement and you who recommend it: You are in over your heads. You don't realize what damage you may do to individuals and to the church if your policy is followed. The effect of your program will be to replicate my life history of up to six months ago in



If Your Friends Are Like You

—and some of them surely are—then it seems altogether likely that you will please them by choosing C&C subscriptions as Christmas gifts. It's a gift appropriate to the season that will serve your friends the year 'round. Moreover, it's quick and easy—and if you give more than one subscription, you can take advantage of special rates.

(1) The first gift subscription is at our regular rate (\$12). All *additional gifts* are priced at \$9—a 25% saving.

(2) If you give at least three gift subscriptions, the fourth can be a gift to yourself: a full year's renewal at the special Christmas rate.

If you act promptly, a handsome hand-signed card will announce your gift before Christmas. Please send your order, with your check, to: Christianity and Crisis, Dept. X, 537 West 121st Street, New York, N. Y. 10027.

others, and then to welcome such frustrated, guilt-ridden individuals into positions of leadership in the church; this in preference to accepting homosexual persons who have learned to use sex in a relationship that deepens their experience of self-giving love.

You speak of therapists who claim various degrees of success. From the age of 20 on I went to various kinds of counselors and psychiatrists. Some offered absurdly simple solutions, like that of the medical doctor who was the first person I went to: "All you need is just more contact with women." From others came the sobering consensus, "This kind cometh not out save by extended psychoanalysis." So at the age of 37 I got a leave of absence from my job and went to New York. My analyst was a pupil of a renowned psychiatrist who claimed to have cured 1,000 homosexuals and never to have had a failure. I paid for the analysis out of my earnings.

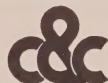
I have my opinions about the noted doctor's statistics, but I will restrict comment to what I know: After the analysis I felt scarcely a glimmer of sexual interest in a female, just as I had felt scarcely a flicker before.

Unmaking Christians

But the analysis did accomplish one thing: It taught

me how to avoid the pain of falling in love with men—heterosexual men, of course, as my sheltered life kept me from knowing any others. What followed was 14 years during which I lived behind an emotional wall. I would not get close to any male for fear of falling in love.

When past 45, I made one last pitiful attempt to become interested in a woman, a lovely woman in her late 30's with whom I shared many interests. She was a pleasant companion, but I simply could not go further than a chaste kiss. After three years, then, for her sake the relationship had to stop. What you said was that if God doesn't choose to transform my desires, at least I will be given the power to arrest their active expression. On the latter point my life is your witness: Given sufficient conviction that God damns persons who fulfill their sexual desires for persons of the same sex, it is possible to repress that kind of expression. Of course, for all save the occasional saint, it will be exchanged for a life of trying to satisfy one's sexual desires in isolation from other human beings. All in all, the Presbyterian policy statement is the greatest boon for masturbation since the feather pillow. It may have escaped your attention that since homosexuals' desires are toward those of the same sex as themselves, they can make sexual objects of themselves that are



Christianity and Crisis

A Christian Journal of Opinion
537 West 121st Street/New York/New York 10027

JOHN C. BENNETT/Senior Contributing Editor

Contributing Editors:

ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN
JAMES H. CONE
HARVEY G. COX
JOHN R. FRY
LEON HOWELL
ROBERT LEKACHMAN
JAMES R. MCGRAW
MARGARET MEAD
HOWARD MOODY
ARTHUR J. MOORE
ROSEMARY RUETHER
ROGER L. SHINN
WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW

Staff:

WAYNE H. COWAN/Editor
ROBERT G. HOYT/Executive Editor
VIVIAN LINDERMAYER/Managing Editor
SUSAN MOYES/Assistant Editor
MARILYN SEVEN/Editorial Assistant

Contents:

page

TO THE PRESBYTERIANS ON HOMOSEXUALITY: YOU SPOKE FROM IGNORANCE/	Calvin Gay 254
APARTHEID AND SLAVERY: SOME PARALLELS/	Henry Bucher 259
A NOVELIST WHO'S FAIR TO FUNDAMENTALISTS/	Virginia Ramey Mollenkott 261
CORRESPONDENCE/	262

Credits:

Cover and Design: Nicholas Luttinger
Christianity and Crisis, Vol. 38, No. 16, October 30, 1978

Published biweekly, except monthly in July, August and January, by Christianity and Crisis, Inc., 537 West 121st St., New York, N. Y. 10027. Subscription price: Canada and U.S. \$12.00; add \$2.00 for foreign postage; students \$6.00. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional mailing offices.

Copyright © 1978 Christianity and Crisis, Inc.

ISSN 0009-5745

erotically fairly adequate, becoming, as one impertinent confidant once remarked of me, "a self-sufficient sex machine."

I hardly need remark that this remains at some distance from the Christian ideal of self-giving love. By making a virtue of celibacy and failing to define it, you welcome such individuals to the ordained offices without appearing to realize that you are arranging the perfect set-up for including a bunch of uptight neurotics in the leadership of the church.

After 14 years someone broke through the wall of my prison; again it was a heterosexual male. The experience was at once so beautiful and so shattering that I went through months of emotional imbalance. When I came out, I knew things could not go on as they had. Perhaps God sent the experience; perhaps God saw to it that when I sought help, it was from a person who, unknown to me, had contacts in the gay community. Perhaps God's Spirit directed me this time to a more realistic therapist. At any rate, there came a day, January 17, 1978, when I had something like a religious experience in which I was overwhelmed by the conviction: "I am gay!" (I had long known I was homosexual, but gayness is something one has to affirm.) "I am gay! I am gay, and I affirm it, and it is going to be a source of joy to me."

It has been. A month later at the age of 54 I had my first sexual experience with another human being. It was properly romantic, firelight and all. Nothing could have been more natural than the experience with Michael. I was even surprised, after all I had been told, that our bodies fitted together so nicely. Afterward I had not the slightest feeling of guilt. Instead I thought, "So this is what they've been trying to keep me from finding out!"; and I regretted all those lonely years. I didn't blame anyone, not even myself, because neither I nor the church nor society was ready then. But I do blame you now for wanting to deprive still more generations of youth of the opportunity for personal fulfillment. I blame you because *now* you ought to know better.

Considering that up to 10 percent of young people are homosexually oriented, have you pondered what the church's new position is going to do to its relation with them? You are laying a fresh burden of guilt upon these youth, telling them that the price of their full acceptance by their church is to agree to lead barren and lonely lives. The instinct for emotional survival is strong enough that many will simply leave the Presbyterian Church—some to go to Christian groups like the Metropolitan Community Churches which accept them, but more to join the unchurched masses. The church's demand that they repent of their sexuality precludes any meaningful ministry among self-accepting gays; its effect will be not to make

Christians, but to unmake them.

I have not been promiscuous since I accepted my gayness. Instead genital sex has become less important than before. Much of what I had interpreted as need for sex I now realized had been emotional insecurity. I found that I no longer desired masturbation, for that meant masochistic fantasies to me, and I have learned that to share affection sexually with another human being is not only more pleasurable, but leaves me feeling fulfilled rather than guilty. I had been taught that homosexuality is a neurosis, one among many expressions of psychic masochism. I realized now that it was not the homosexuality that was masochistic, but my lifelong endeavor to suppress it. I have felt without neurosis for the first time in my life. The feeling of wholeness has been beautiful.

More Double Standards

To me, your policy statement appears both hypocritical in itself and calculated to foster hypocrisy in the church. It denounces homosexual practice as sinful, but it discourages any effort to inquire into the sex lives of candidates. You explain this "discretion" and "sensitivity" on the ground that asking candidates such questions would be "a hindrance to God's grace." I don't quite see how that follows from your premises; I do see that *not* asking such questions avoids trouble, and that its practical effect is to let "unrepentant" gay candidates do as they like as long as they keep it secret. I wonder that you prefer

With This Issue...

LEON HOWELL becomes a Contributing Editor of *CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS*. Regular readers will recognize in this announcement belated acknowledgment of a long-standing reality: Howell is among the journal's most frequent and valued contributors. A veteran journalist with a wide range of interests, he has spent a number of years covering events in Asia for *C&C* and other publications. He is the author of *Freedom City*; *The Substance of Things Hoped For*, a report on the Delta Ministry of the 60's; co-author (with Barbara Howell) of *Southeast Asians Speak Out* and (with Michael Morrow) of *Asia, Oil Politics and the Energy Crisis*.

With regret, we also announce the resignation of Frank Baldwin as Contributing Editor owing to the press of other commitments. Baldwin will be particularly remembered for his report on Koreagate ("The Korea Lobby," July 19, 1976), which anticipated later findings of the national media and merited an award from the Associated Church Press.

dishonest persons (or, at best, persons not free to integrate their public and private lives) as church leaders rather than permit openly homosexual persons to live out the truth they see without sacrificing their calling. Contrariwise, you invite practicing homosexuals into the fellowship of the church and encourage them to declare themselves, but you would penalize those who do so by denying them leadership roles. We used to deny equality within the church to slaves; until recently, to women. Now, by formal declaration, there will be a new group of second-class citizens.

You assert that for the church to accept homosexuals into places of leadership is "to permit the church to model for the world forms of sexual behavior that may seriously injure individuals, families, and the whole fabric of human society," yet you call upon society to accept such persons in all other jobs, including that of school teacher.

You interpret Paul as saying in Romans 1:26 that even homosexual *passion* (as contrasted with behavior) is dishonorable, yet you would welcome persons of homosexual feelings into places of church leadership provided they don't act out their passions. If you are going to disregard Paul on one point, how can you be so uncompromising on the other?

Your policy statement separates all people into two categories: those who engage in homosexual behavior and those who do not. In truth, as I have discovered, there are many ways in which gay people relate to one another. One night Dale permitted me to hold his hand while we watched television; as long as I live I will remember the sublimity of that experience. My point is that you claim to be giving us "definitive guidance," but you give us no guidance whatsoever on what constitutes homosexual behavior.

In a final act of grace the General Assembly exempted me and others already ordained from penalty for our unrepentant sinfulness, but with the result of having two criteria for conduct by Presbyterian officers, one for those already ordained and another for candidates. I am grateful for my reprieve, but ashamed to be separated in this fashion from my brothers and sisters in Presbyterians for Gay Concerns, and I intend to use my favored status to work within the church for their acceptance.

You will have noticed that I have said little about the Bible. I know of no indication that the Bible ever discussed the kind of loving homosexual relation we have been concerned with here. God is not a neighborhood gossip. I do not believe God is concerned with the specifics of what people do in their bedrooms, but only with whether they act in redemptive love toward one another. I used the word hypocritical before, and I do not shrink from using it again. On

nothing more precise or binding than "the Reformed tradition," you confidently declare that the Leviticus rules against homosexuality are "moral law" while the rules against mixing wool and linen are only "rituals." You choose to take Paul's rejection of homosexual practice as divine law, but ignore his dictum, "It is shameful for a woman to speak in church," even though Paul claimed it to be a command of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:35-37). Paul said that homosexual behavior is "unnatural," but he said the same thing about women wearing short hair or men long, and when has the General Assembly spoken out on this? In short, on this subject—contrary to the trend of General Assemblies dealing with other issues over the past 40 years—your statement reaches out for the conservative interpretation of every relevant passage. One has to wonder whether you were not more motivated by a deep-set revulsion toward homosexuality—what the statement itself calls *homophobia*—than by your principles of Biblical interpretation.

Is Anybody Listening?

Having expressed myself plainly, even caustically, I want to acknowledge that the policy statement included some good elements as well, most notably its call for increased dialogue on homosexuality both within the church and with outside groups. But I have reason to wonder whether anyone is listening to that call.

Two versions of this article were submitted to two leading church-related publications. In rejecting the first version, essentially identical with the one you have been reading, the editor said that in the present anti-homosexual climate "the publication of material under pseudonym looks like...an attempt to manipulate or change attitudes without a concurrent taking of responsibility." What he meant by "taking responsibility," I must infer, was a willingness on my part to surrender my job and my future in return for one opportunity to state my case.

The second manuscript, a condensation, was returned with a letter in which the editor simply said his editorial sensitivity told him "it might be better not" to publish the article. I suspect he was probably right in a way: This essay may well be troubling even to some readers of this journal, who have already had some chance to learn what homosexuals believe about their freedom, in Christ, to be themselves. Though the General Assembly explicitly renounces homophobia and proclaims that the church must remain open to discussion and reflection, it is not clear that homophobia has in fact diminished, much less disappeared.

That is, of course, something I regret, something that impinges cruelly on my life. But others' fears will not destroy the insights I have gained or the peace I have at last achieved. I have been a Presbyterian minister for nearly 30 years. Now at last I feel almost ready to be one. □

Apartheid and Slavery: Some Parallels

Henry Bucher

"...how is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?"—Dr. Samuel Johnson commenting on the rebellion in the American colonies, in *Taxation No Tyranny*, 1775.

FEW JOURNALS OF ITS KIND have given more serious consideration to the South African question than CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS. What else can we say about this enormously complex moral, economic and political issue? Convinced that those who fail to understand the mistakes of the past are doomed to repeat them, I offer as my contribution to the dialogue a brief discussion of the most striking parallels and paradoxes with regard to the present conflict in South Africa and the 19th-century Atlantic slave trade.

By no means do I want to draw parallels between blacks in South Africa and Afro-Americans in the United States (historically, the situation of Native Americans has more parallels). Nor shall I elaborate on the United Nations' definition of apartheid as "20th-century slavery." Instead, I wish to illustrate some basic similarities between the world's response to the issues of corporate responsibility and liberation movements today and in the 1800's. The parallels may be presented in a series of theses:

(1) *Responsibility for injustice toward people living under an oppressive system may be placed at many levels, but capital investment is a key element.*

American missionaries visiting a slave baracoon on Africa's west coast in 1842 criticized a Spaniard in charge of the preparations for shipping the slaves to the Americas. He retorted that the United States built the ships and financed the expedition. Protests to

Washington by the missionaries brought official denials from Commodore Matthew C. Perry, commander of our West Africa Squadron in 1843; but five years later the head of the American missionaries in Gabon wrote: "An American vessel sailed a few days since from Cape Lopez with a cargo of slaves. Whether it sailed under American colors or not I do not know. But nearly all the slave trade from this coast is now carried on in American vessels and with American capital."

The nature and scope of US investments in South Africa are slowly being confirmed, even if the impact of our support for the white minority regime is still being questioned in some quarters. Part of our reluctance to act today is related to the second parallel:

(2) *What appears so obvious in retrospect does not seem so clear when one's own pocketbook is involved.*

The American missionaries above were sent through the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Their statements, to be sure, received much attention and support in their headquarters in Boston—also home of the abolitionists. Many American Board members were also active in the abolitionist movement, and one of their missionaries in Africa was asked to resign unless he freed two slaves owned by his family in South Carolina. Outrage at the horrors of the Atlantic slave trade notwithstanding, slaveholders were sitting with the American Board as both corporate and honorary members when such decisions were being made.

The paradox of the situation is clear to us now. So are similar historical ironies in retrospect. But only persons of uncommon insight observe and report on these paradoxes in their own time.

While an increasing number of Americans, including some corporate executives, are acknowledging a direct connection between US investment and white control in South Africa, a very common excuse for continuing and even increasing our capital involvement was identically expressed by Europeans and Americans with regard to the slave trade: "If we don't participate in this enormously profitable enterprise, our competitors will."

This argument was a convincing one for continuing the Atlantic slave trade, and it remains equally powerful today for those who argue that divestment

A Correction

Our thanks to Walter Cason of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary for informing us that Alain Gheerbrant's book *L'Eglise Rebelle d'Amérique Latine*, mentioned as a resource in our Puebla issue ("From Medellín to Puebla: Light for the path," Sept. 18), is indeed available in English. It was published in 1974 as a British Penguin book, *The Rebel Church in Latin America*.

HENRY BUCHER teaches in the African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the author of *The Third World: The Middle East* (Pendulum).

on moral grounds would simply change the nationality of the structures of oppression. Experience has shown this argument to have validity up to a point; after all, some American arms embargoes resulted in the same arms being supplied by France. Within the context of human rights, however, the argument is a strong one for multinational collaboration. In the 1800's the United States joined the major European powers to police the seas in a slow but ultimately effective multinational action that expedited the termination of the slave trade. For economic reasons similar to those of the 19th century, unilateral embargoes on goods or loans to South Africa are likely to be ineffective.

A Microcosm of Global Problems

(3) *No major action involving the oppression of a majority by a minority can be implemented (superior arms notwithstanding) without some complicity from individuals among the minority.*

Along Africa's coasts there were many indigenous leaders who agreed to supply Western ships with slaves—though many also refused. Such contracts were not only economically beneficial to the African ruler and his immediate family; they also provided the most advanced arms allowing him more effectively to capture his traditional enemies.

Until recently, most of the American press did not seem overly concerned about the voices of black South Africans. Now that world attention is focusing more on the crisis in South Africa, however, we can easily find statements by "black leaders" in important American media. Often the statement is a paid advertisement, and the "leader" has been appointed by the South African Government. Such is the case with the Wall Street Journal (March 9, 1978) in which the South African Government bought half a page for Chief Gatsha Buthelezi. The ad was entitled: "Sanctions would be crippling to my people, says South African Black leader." Chief Buthelezi, of the newly created "Kwazulu Homeland," is thus perceived by many Americans as a black spokesman stating his true views—but they are not informed that to advocate sanctions is a serious crime in South Africa, or that Buthelezi has guardedly modified the position expressed in the *Journal* ad.

Meanwhile, most of the leaders most respected by the majority of blacks are "legally" done away with (Steve Biko), or detained in prisons like the nefarious Robin Island, or banned. No wonder that exiled South African (white) newspaper editor Donald Woods can say: "Young urban blacks . . . think Andy Young is too moderate. One Russian Kalashnikov rifle is a lot more substantial than the Carter Administration slapping the Vorster Government lightly on the wrist. If the Cubans marched into South Africa today, blacks would greet them with open arms."

(4) *Increased profits through guaranteed inexpensive labor are basic to the success of the slave system and to the modern South African economy.*

Cheap labor has always been important for labor-intensive industries such as cotton production in the pre-industrial South and mining in South Africa today. Even in capital-intensive industries, however,

cheap labor can make the difference in establishing competitive prices for the final product and in insuring unprecedented returns on investments.

Apartheid is neither the cause nor the core of the impasse in South Africa—cheap labor imposed by white minority rule is. If the present South African Government could guarantee inexpensive labor and attractive profits by means other than apartheid, Pretoria would quickly oblige.

(5) *Effective legal actions take years to implement under the best conditions.*

Although the slave trade was legally abolished by 1808 in America and Europe, it took several decades of multinational policing to end it, after which slavery itself continued for many years. Whether majority rule in South Africa comes by violent or nonviolent means, the process will be a long one. An effective internationally coordinated boycott of South Africa has not even begun.

What force today can play the role with relation to the South African Government and multinational corporations that the most powerful nations in the 19th century played vis-à-vis those involved in the slave trade? Such a structure does not yet exist, and it appears likely at present that it will take a long time to become effective. The reasons for this are related to the final parallel:

(6) *The Atlantic slave trade was, and multinational commitments in South Africa are, integral parts of a global economy dependent upon interrelated economic and political structures.*

Even with the fruits of the Industrial Revolution, the slave trade and slavery were difficult to suppress. In our increasingly interdependent contemporary situation, the role and power of multinational corporations are growing. The problem with such corporations is not that they have global dimensions, but that there are no commensurate global structures that have control over their major goal—profits.

Those who control multinational corporations are powerful forces in the very nations which are least likely to work for the goals of the New International Economic Order and to heed the warnings from the Club of Rome studies on the bleak future for Spaceship Earth at present rates of consumption and waste. In brief, the rich are growing richer and the poor are becoming poorer—whether we speak of nations or groups of people within nations.

Not only is white-ruled South Africa, with its enormous mineral wealth and cheap labor, important for the economic health of major multinational corporations and, by extension, for the economy of "the free world," but it also stands as a paradigm in miniature of our global dichotomy between the rich and poor. If the entire world could be proportionally squeezed into an area the size of South Africa (about twice the size of Texas), the West (including Japan) would be in the place of South African whites (20 percent)—consuming about 80 percent of the resources and in control of most of the structures of power.

The South Africa question remains an enigma with dimensions that mirror in miniature the basic issues facing Spaceship Earth as a whole. We are all involved. We all stand to lose or profit, whatever the outcome. □

A Novelist Who's Fair to Fundamentalists

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott

THE LAST YEAR OF THE WAR is a lively, funny, serious, well-written novel that tells the truth about American fundamentalists. To the best of my knowledge, this is very nearly a first. Fiction about fundamentalism has tended to fall into one of two categories: either idealized, pallidly pious and oversimplified non-art, or devastating and often witty parody (good art, perhaps, but unfair to the fundamentalist world-view). On the theory that fundamentalists, like all other persons, are our neighbors against whom we must not bear false witness, I welcome the precise authenticity of Shirley Nelson's portrait.

It takes one to know one. I was brought up in the Plymouth Brethren Assemblies (we knew most main-line Protestants were not "saved"; it never occurred to us that Roman Catholics might consider themselves Christians), and I was educated at Bob Jones University (where Billy Graham was denounced as too liberal). Except for its locale in Chicago, Calvary Bible Institute, the setting of *The Last Year of the War*, could be any fundamentalist Bible school or college. It's all there, the positive as well as the negative, every detail nuanced to perfection. The omnipresent slogans tacked up in hallways, jotted in Bible flyleaves, scrawled in notes to one another: "Let go and let God," "Hopeless without Christ," "Only what's done for Christ will last." The veneer of intimacy adopted by those who espouse Christian love in theory but have no real relationship with themselves and hence do not really relate to anyone else (Miss Mackey of the dean of women's staff, for instance, who never gets much deeper than a breezy "Pray for him, won't you, gal?"). The magnificent singing that lifts one to the gates of heaven. The judgmentalism born of having to explain everything: when one student's boyfriend is killed in the war, another asserts that "Beverly had loved Bob too much, and the Lord had to take him." The intense self-discipline and earnest vocation of many of the students, so busy at their studies and evangelistic efforts that they have not taken time to walk beside Lake Michigan or browse in Marshall Field.

And more: The haggles about Eternal Security and the exact chronology of the Great Tribulation. The fear of the body: voluntary segregation of the sexes except for those engaged or about to become so—a segregation so extreme that being seen together several times constitutes an admission of "going

steady." The homophobia: a homosexual couple is expelled, and Soup, a likable young woman who yearns for a man, is embarrassed and wounded by an accusation of homosexuality, based apparently on her large size and exuberant spirits. The celebrity complex that simultaneously rejects and thrills to secular fame: "Kids said he [one of the piano teachers] had once turned down an invitation to arrange for Fred War-ing." And the widespread happiness: "Happiness was a kind of badge at Calvary: it was not only nice to be happy, it was right."

In a hilarious sequence when Jo Fuller, the heroine, tries to witness to a black woman in a trolley car, Ms. Nelson encapsulates the mutual distrust of fundamentalists raised in slightly different traditions. Because the black woman is wearing a low-cut dress, Jo cannot quite accept the reality of her enthusiastic testimony to her faith in Christ. And because Jo is embarrassed

A response to THE LAST YEAR OF THE WAR by Shirley Nelson (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 255 pp., \$9.95.

by charismatic emotion, the black woman is not so sure that Jo's profession of faith is real either. That Ms. Nelson can bring off this scene without caricaturing either woman is a tribute both to her compassionate vision and to her artistic control. The scene is amusing, but the people retain their dignity, the validity of their own points of view.

"Dark and Light Together"

The student body exudes concern for the welfare of others, but it is a distinctly privatized and spiritualized concern. Posters urge that students "Pray for the oppressed of Latin America"—but one gathers that the oppression is exclusively spiritual, to be lifted by individual conversion. Hitler's rise to power was caused, one student explains, by "modernism in the churches, higher criticism in the seminaries." Social concern for Africa focuses on leprosy, not apartheid. Yet the caring is intense, sincere, sometimes compulsive. Students feel guilty to walk a block without giving out a tract, and the more sensitive among them worry that what they tell themselves is tact may turn out to be guile or simple cowardice.

Because all the caring is based on a passion for Scripture ("if she could swallow the Bible whole," one student thinks, "it would not be enough"), it seems clear that fundamentalist youths are an enormous and largely untapped energy resource. They will work to correct unjust social structures only if and when they are convinced that the Bible mandates not only personal salvation/evangelism but also righteousness/justice. Any approach to them must be solidly and conservatively biblical. The greatest hurdle is overcoming their distrust so that they will listen at all. Once they are convinced, however, their fundamentalist earnestness provides a strong stimulus toward following through.

Just as Chaim Potok has written so truthfully of

VIRGINIA RAMEY MOLLENKOTT is a member of the faculty of William Paterson College of New Jersey. She is co-author, with Letha Scanlon, of *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?* (Abingdon).

human conflicts within Hassidic Judaism that his themes become universal. Ms. Nelson has written so truthfully of human conflicts within Protestant fundamentalism that her themes emerge as universal. Jo Fuller attends Calvary Bible Institute against the wishes of her family, especially her father, a rationalist who has rebelled against his own father's religious "Emotionalism." Jo's one year at the institute coincides with the last year of World War II. Her brother, Loring, has been reported Missing in Action, but a letter from the lone survivor of Loring's plane crew has made clear that he is dead. Jo cannot bring herself to accept the fact of her brother's death because she is afraid to acknowledge death itself.

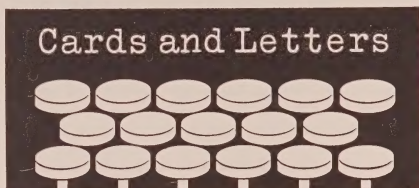
Ms. Nelson achieves some of her finest moments in her handling of the sickness, dreams and hallucinations brought on by Jo's attempts to deny reality—moments reminiscent of Doris Lessing's powerful descriptions of Martha's bouts with madness in *The Four-Gated City*. Nelson is also remarkable in her unsparing yet compassionate depiction of Clyde MacQuade, a campus "creep" who has no social awareness yet is so doggedly devoted to Christ that one feels a pang at the news of his death. The last year of the World War Clyde yearns to fight in is also the last year of his pathetic war against his own diabetes, social rejection, and what he terms "vile and lewd" thoughts.

And it is the last year of Jo Fuller's war against the lion who is also the lamb. She is helped chiefly by two people who illustrate that the greatest fundamentalist is the most humanly honest one. Dr. Peckham, a Bible teacher, is large-minded enough to accept "the paradoxes of mankind" and to know that when people are becoming truly Christ-like they are not impressed with their own godliness but will "only seem to be more human." And Jewel, a crippled Appalachian woman, is able to understand that spiritual numbness is not necessarily spiritual death, and that people must be granted time and space to develop their own rapprochement with God.

Jo is finally able to accept "dark and light together," finding love of life in the recognition of death. Although she knows that "Loving, we tremble on the brink of disaster," she also knows that "to pull back" is "extinction." It is typical of Ms. Nelson's ability to find the perfect objective correlative—the right set of external facts to bring a sensory experience which

inevitably evokes a particular emotion—that almost our final glimpse of Jo Fuller occurs as she is whirling and dancing down the snowy streets of Chicago, imitating Helen Forrest's version of "Takin' a chance on love."⁵

In a college writing course several years ago, I structured all essay topics around the theme of doing justice to various segments of the world population. When we came to the unit on "justice for criminals," one student protested loudly that there was no reason to do justice to criminals since by their acts they had placed themselves outside the law. Sometimes I think that those of us who consider ourselves either above or beyond fundamentalism have been guilty of a similar failure of logic. Because fundamentalists have often pilloried others, we have scorned them in return. In *The Last Year of the War*, Shirley Nelson has crafted an experience that will help us to see more clearly and, therefore, to speak more faithfully. That all this worthwhile instruction comes packaged in a delightful "good read" is cause for celebration. □



The Episcopal Church on Abortion

TO THE EDITOR: A letter signed by D. D. Schut appearing in your issue of August 21 challenged a statement in an earlier article by Carter Heyward and Suzanne Hiatt ("The Trivialization of Women," June 26) claiming that the Episcopal Church was on record as supporting abortion. Mr. Schut wanted to know what such a claim was based on. In your editor's note you correctly referred to the resolution of the 65th General Convention. However, I'm concerned about the impression that could be left by your note.

You lifted out a few of the phrases of the resolution that give support for abortion in certain defined cases, and those that oppose legislation restricting individuals as they make their own decisions in regard to abortion. Along with the statement in the original article, this could give your readers the false impression that the Episcopal Church gives an unqualified support of abortion. This is far from the case.

The life of the fetus is held to be a gift of God's love and thereby sacred. Abortions for convenience are specifically rejected. The "support" given in some cases is only an acknowledgment that abortion may be permissible under certain circumstances. In other cases members of the Episcopal Church are urged to seek the advice of a priest and possibly penance. Members of the church are urged to explore other preferable courses of action with people who come to them for counsel.

While I don't believe that the Episcopal Church's

WANTED: ITINERANT THEOLOGICAL TROUBADOUR

Stephen Rose has been working for several months turning the entire Gospel of Mark into a song cycle. That this may evolve as a community exercise in the recovery of biblical narrative, he urgently solicits invitations from seminaries, congregations, choirs, etc., to share the process. Has guitar, will travel. Write Box 249, Stockbridge, MA 01262, or call (413) 298-4885.

position goes far enough in protecting the life of the unborn child, I do believe the statement is a serious attempt on the part of Christians to face the complexities and realities of abortion. On the basis of the statement, it makes no more sense for this church and its leaders to join a "freedom of choice" group than to join a "right to life" group. Either action would be misleading.

To do the one could easily give the false impression that the Episcopal Church believes abortion to pose no ethical problems. That isn't what we said, and it is certainly not part of the Catholic and Apostolic tradition. On the other hand, while we could theoretically join with "right to life" advocates in upholding the sacredness of the life of the unborn child, the reality is that this could give additional weight to an absolutistic approach to the issues involved, and to the attempt at legislative restriction.

The General Convention statement has something to say to each side of the current debate. Our bishops, priests and lay leaders serve us best when they represent the fullness of our position. I've enclosed a copy of the resolution which I urge you to print in full.

(The Rev.) ROBERT A. GALLAGHER
Vicar, St. Elisabeth's Church
Philadelphia, PA.

Following is the text of the resolution as adopted by the 1976 General Convention of the Episcopal Church:

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

(Act of August 12, 1970; Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code)

- Title of Publication: CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS
- Date of Filing: October 1, 1978
- Frequency of Issue: Biweekly except monthly in July, August and January.
- Location of known office of publication: 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
- Location of the headquarters or general business offices of the Publisher: 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
- Names and addresses of Publisher, Editor and Managing Editor: CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS, INC., Wayne H. Cowan, Vivian Lindermayer, all of 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
- Owner: CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS, INC., 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
- Known bondholders, mortgages, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None.
- The purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes have not changed during preceding 12 months.
- Extent and Nature of Circulation

	Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Single issue published nearest to filing date
A. Total no. copies printed	20,655	21,300
B. Paid Circulation		
1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales.	399	170
2. Mail subscriptions	19,894	20,650
C. Total Paid Circulation	20,293	20,820
D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies	224	250
E. Total distribution	20,517	21,070
F. 1. Office Use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing	138	230
2. Returns from news agents	0	0
G. Total	20,655	21,300
- I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
(Signed) Wayne H. Cowan, Editor

(1) That the beginning of new human life, because it is a gift of the power of God's love for his people, and thereby sacred, should not and must not be taken unadvisedly or lightly but in full accordance of the understanding for which this power to conceive and give birth is bestowed by God.

(2) Such understanding includes the responsibility for Christians to limit the size of their families and to practice responsible birth control. Such means for moral limitations do not include abortions for convenience.

(3) That the position of this Church, stated at the 62nd General Convention of the Church in Seattle in 1967 which declared support for the "termination of pregnancy," particularly in those cases where "the physical or mental health of the mother is threatened seriously, or where there is substantial reason to believe that the child would be born badly deformed in mind or body, or where the pregnancy has resulted from rape or incest," is reaffirmed. Termination of pregnancy for these reasons is permissible.

(4) That in those cases where it is firmly and deeply believed by the person or persons concerned that pregnancy should be terminated for causes other than the above, members of this Church are urged to seek the advice and counsel of a Priest of this Church, and, where appropriate, Penance.

INKLINGS '79

A Calendar Inspired by

C. S. Lewis

and Those Who Inspired Him



Handsome 1979 wall calendar with room for making notes and with words for daily Christian living taken from the writings of C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, J. R. R. Tolkien, Dorothy Sayers, George Herbert, and others. Opens to 8½ by 21 inches.



A wonderful Christmas "stocking filler." Designed by Richard Mann, Director, Museum of Religious Art, Cathedral of St John the Divine, New York.

Cahill & Co., 145 Palisade St. Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

Please send _____ copies of *Inklings '79* @ \$2.95 each, plus 85¢ per address for shipping. Enclosed is my check for \$_____ (Use separate sheet for orders for more than one address. Gift message enclosed at your request.) **CR1**

Name _____
Address _____
Zip _____

☐ I am interested in quantity discount rates for organizations.

(5) That whenever members of this Church are consulted with regard to proposed termination of pregnancy, they are to explore with the person or persons seeking advice and counsel other preferable courses of action.

(6) That the Episcopal Church express its unequivocal opposition to any legislation on the part of the national or state governments which would abridge or deny the right of individuals to reach informed decisions in this matter and to act upon them. □

Liberation Theology and the Spirit of Protestantism

TO THE EDITOR: A "well-done" to St. Hereticus for exposing, "in eight easy lessons," ploys by which to "dispose of" liberation theology ("Theological Gamesmanship," Aug. 21). Do I detect in the process a ninth lesson on how to get liberation theology to dispose of itself? To wit: Suggest, by the tone of one's teaching, that liberation theology is beyond criticism. Encourage its advocates to dismiss any criticism as an attempt to "dispose of" liberation theology, and to mark anyone who dares to offer a criticism as a hopeless defender of the status quo and an "enemy" of the poor and oppressed. Feed the righteousness of liberation theology until it becomes self-righteousness about liberation theology—until its proponents, so intent upon fighting self-interest and falsehood with their truth, forget or deem it unnecessary to fight

self-interest and falsehood in their truth. Such a gambit is more threatening to liberation theology than any bishop's easy move to dispose of it.

By the way, this insight is expressed far better than I could ever say it in a book entitled *The Spirit of Protestantism*. I suspect St. Hereticus knows the book.

JOHN ROGERS
Shreveport, La.

Some Facts to Ponder

TO THE EDITOR: If Puebla needs data on the needs of the poor ("Puebla: Decision Point for the Latin American Church," Sept. 18), they can be found in abundance in the most recent (Fall, 1978) appeal for funds from the United States Committee for UNICEF:

—"The threat of severe malnutrition, or even starvation, faces 300 to 350 million children in poorer countries."

—"Nearly thirty percent will die before age five."

—"Their existence plummeted from barely tolerable to desperate."

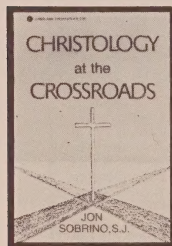
The conclusion is that there is a grim emergency today, and that \$64,517,000 is needed for special assistance.

Our government's right hand doesn't seem to know what its left hand is doing.

HELEN MEARS
New York, N.Y.

"The most thorough study of Christ's nature based on Latin America's 'liberation theology.'"

—TIME MAGAZINE



Christology at the Crossroads

A Latin American Approach

JON SOBRINO, S.J.

"A penetrating analysis of both European and Latin theology ... his primary effort is to contrast the two approaches as clearly as possible."—*Theological Studies*

"The thoroughness of the author's survey, the fullness of his documentation, and the persuasive power of his own affirmations make clear that *Christology at the Crossroads* will not leave us stranded at the crossroad but will start us down exciting and demanding new paths."—Robert McAfee Brown, *Union Theological Seminary*

Quality paperback \$12.95

CHRISTIAN FAITH IN A RELIGIOUSLY PLURAL WORLD

DONALD G. DAWE and JOHN B. CARMAN The world's religious pluralism and the teaching of the universality of Christian faith create a tension that is felt in theological circles as well as in local churches. Outstanding scholars committed to interreligious dialogue approach a reconciliation of the fact and the teaching. Quality paperback \$7.95

THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE Toward a Participatory Democracy in South Africa

RICHARD TURNER. Foreword by Alan Paton. The author analyzes exploitative capitalism in the light of Christian ethics and proposes a political, economic system for South Africa more compatible with Christian justice.

Quality paperback \$5.95

FOOD/ENERGY AND THE MAJOR FAITHS

JOSEPH GREMILLION. The facts of the food/energy crisis, their impact of peace and justice, and the role of religion in political society are urgently outlined in this major study by the editor of *The Gospel of Peace and Justice*.

Quality paperback \$9.95

THE REEL REVOLUTION A Film Primer on Liberation

NEIL HURLEY, S.J. A non-Marxist presentation of class struggle through the medium of film. Classic and contemporary films are analyzed in this valuable resource book.

Quality paperback \$7.95

At bookstores, or write:



ORBIS BOOKS Maryknoll, N.Y. 10545

ORBIS BOOKS 9D
Maryknoll, NY 10545

Please send:

\$_____enclosed

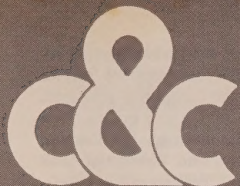
(Books shipped postage free.)

☐ Bill me ☐ Send latest catalog

Name

Address

Zip



Christianity and Crisis

Vol. 37, No. 12, July 18, 1977; 75 cents a copy

John C. Bennett and Robert McAfee Brown

THEOLOGIES OF LIBERATION

Readers' Responses:
Homosexuality and the Church

Bible Lesson for the Court
James R. McGraw

Bible Lesson for the Court

WHITE HOUSE WORSHIP services are no longer with us. Our current President walks freely among his fellow citizens, enabling him to forsake the security of closed invitations to the East Room and to worship in his neighborhood parish.

But Congressional prayer breakfasts are still in vogue. And now, it seems, there is a real need for Bible study among the justices of the Supreme Court.

In light of a recent Supreme Court decision regarding seniority work rules, I'd recommend a close study of the gospel according to Matthew, chapter 20, verses 1-16—the parable of the laborers in the vineyard.

A certain grape grower went out early one morning to hire help for his vineyard. He found some unemployed folks hanging around the marketplace looking for work, and he hired them at the going pre-inflation wage of 20 cents (one denarius) a day. Then as now, it appears, grape workers labored for peanuts.

Three hours later, the little old winemaker went into the marketplace again and hired some more workers at the same wage. At noon, and at 3 p.m., he hired still other workers and he kept right on hiring up to 5 p.m.

In hiring the last group of workers, the grape grower asked, "Why do you stand here idle all day?" They answered simply, "Because no one has hired us." And being an equal opportunity employer, the grape grower hired them on the spot. Same terms, same pay, even though the work day was almost over.

When the work day ended at 6 o'clock, all the laborers went to the vineyard steward's office to get their pay. Mutterings of "reverse discrimination" and "preferential treatment" were soon heard, because the steward had been instructed to pay all laborers the same wage regardless of the hours they had spent in the vineyard.

Summer Schedule

In accordance with our summer schedule we will publish one issue in July and one issue in August. With the September 19 issue we will resume our regular biweekly schedule.

"Unfair," cried those laborers who had been working all day, who felt that seniority of service ought to be rewarded. But their employer answered, "I'm not cheating you. I'm giving you exactly what we agreed upon early in the morning. But I'm also giving the same wage to those who, through no fault of their own, stood in the marketplace all day looking for work and no one would hire them. In my vineyard, the last will be first, the first will be last."

In today's marketplace, the last are also first but hardly in accord with the compassion and concern of the parable. The "last-hired"—minority group workers and women—are most often the "first-fired" when layoffs are necessary and seniority rules are applied. Youth, especially minority youth under 21, are the last considered and the first refused employment. Because these young people lack both seniority and experience, and usually have no real preparation for actual job performance, employers bypass them to opt for older, more stable and experienced workers. The result is an official unemployment figure among black teenagers in excess of 40 percent and more likely 65 to 75 percent in hardcore inner city areas.

By a 7-2 decision, the Supreme Court recently ruled that workers whose employment rights were first legislatively recognized in Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act may still be legally rendered last by "bona fide" seniority systems which perpetuated the effects of discrimination before July 2, 1965, when the title went into effect.

The opinion of the Court, written by Justice Potter Stewart, said:

Although a seniority system inevitably tends to perpetuate the effects of pre-act discrimination in such cases, the Congressional judgment was that Title VII should not outlaw the use of existing seniority lists and thereby destroy or water down the vested seniority rights of employees simply because their employer had engaged in discrimination prior to the act.

Unlike the Matthean parable, the Supreme Court majority holds that those who got their jobs early (most likely white males) should be sustained in their advantage over those who were forced to stand idly in the marketplace all day; even if the early morning laborers were hired on a discriminatory basis.

The dissenting minority opinion, written by Justice Thurgood Marshall and joined by Justice William J. Brennan Jr., offered a somewhat different moral and historical perspective:

Prior to 1965, blacks and Spanish-speaking Americans who were able to find employment were assigned the lowest-paid, most menial jobs in many industries throughout the nation but especially in the South. In many factories blacks

were hired as laborers while whites were trained and given skilled positions; in the transportation industry blacks could only become porters; and in steel plants blacks were assigned to the coke ovens and blast furnaces, "the hotter and dirtier" places of employment.

The Court holds, in essence, that while after 1965 these incumbent employees are entitled to an equal opportunity to advance to more desirable jobs, to take advantage of that opportunity they must pay a price; they must surrender the seniority they have accumulated in their old jobs. For many, the price will be too high, and they will be locked into their previous positions.

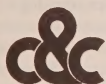
What profiteth a man or woman to gain new opportunity and job access if he or she loses the sole claim to seniority in the process? The last shall be first by becoming last all over again.

The Supreme Court ruling is yet another reminder of the lingering legacy of Richard Nixon. The devastating effects of past employment discrimination are less to be considered than the clear and demonstrable proof of an *intent* to discriminate. Doesn't that sound familiar in light of the first David Frost interview with Richard Nixon? The real test of obstruction of justice, according to the former President, is found in the areas of motive and intent.

As guardians and interpreters of the Constitution, the Supreme Court justices are expected to be concerned with the intent of the founding fathers. With regard to constitutional intent, Theodore J. St. Antoine, dean of the University of Michigan Law School, has written (*The New York Times*, Nov. 26, 1976):

All it [the Constitution] guarantees is the "equal protection of the laws." The mandate of equal treatment, however, presupposes equal status or circumstances. Whether Government-sponsored preferences based on race or sex are constitutionally permissible should, therefore, depend upon a comparative assessment of the current status of minorities, women and white males. . . . If preferential treatment is a needed step toward a more fully integrated work force, toward genuine equality of employment opportunity, then no constitutional barriers should stand in the way. Equal protection is not a mathematicians' construct, but a realists' injunction to treat alike those who are, in this remarkably diverse world, truly alike.

While appeals are being prepared, let us also hope the Supreme Court justices engage in some serious Bible study, beginning with chapter 20 of Matthew's gospel, before rendering a subsequent decision. Perhaps they will come to realize that those who have



Christianity and Crisis

A Christian Journal of Opinion
537 West 121st Street / New York / New York 10027

JOHN C. BENNETT / Senior Contributing Editor

Contributing Editors:

FRANK BALDWIN
ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN
JAMES H. CONE
HARVEY G. COX
JOHN R. FRY
ROBERT LEKACHMAN
JAMES R. MCGRAW
MARGARET MEAD
HOWARD MOODY
ARTHUR J. MOORE
ROSEMARY RUETHER
ROGER L. SHINN
WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW

Staff:

WAYNE H. COWAN/Editor
VIVIAN LINDERMAYER/Managing Editor (on leave)
ROBERT G. HOYT/Associate Editor
CATHERINE MacDONALD/Assistant Editor
MARILYN SEVEN/Editorial Assistant

Contents:

Page

BIBLE LESSON FOR THE COURT/ James R. McGraw	162
FITTING THE LIBERATION THEME INTO OUR THEOLOGICAL AGENDA/ John C. Bennett	164
CONTEXT AFFECTS CONTENT: THE ROOTEDNESS OF ALL THEOLOGY/ Robert McAfee Brown	170
READERS' RESPONSE: HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE CHURCH/	174

Credits:

cover and design by Cord Keller
Christianity and Crisis, Vol. 37, No. 12, July 18, 1977

Published biweekly, except monthly in July, August and January, by Christianity and Crisis, Inc., 537 West 121st St., New York, N. Y. 10027. Subscription price: Canada and U.S., \$10.00; add \$1.00 for foreign postage; students \$8.00. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional mailing offices.

Copyright © 1977 Christianity and Crisis, Inc.
ISSN 0009-5745

been left standing in the marketplace until late in the day should not be punished for their enforced idleness. Nor should those who have enjoyed the benefits of long-term employment feel cheated if

justice in the vineyard demands some last minute benefits.

JAMES R. MCGRAW

Fitting the Liberation Theme Into Our Theological Agenda

John C. Bennett

This article is adapted from a lecture delivered at Union Theological Seminary in New York City marking the 50th anniversary of Dr. Bennett's graduation from the school.

IF WE ARE TO DISCOVER where the liberation theme in theology fits into our theological agenda, it will be helpful first to reflect on the general notion of theological themes. We have had so many special theologies in recent years that many of us are bewildered: theologies of hope, theologies of revolution, political theologies, black theology, liberation theology, theology from the perspective of the women's movement, theology of the environment. These trends change rapidly as one movement gives way to another; constantly we hear of new critiques and new emphases. These theologies are special also in that they derive from special circumstances, from the experience of a particular group or person.

It will not remove our confusion but may help make it tolerable if we recall that there is nothing new in this—either in the existence of themes which determine the pervasive emphases of a given theology, or in the relationship of a theological theme to the experience of those who develop it. By way of illustration I offer two brief summarizing passages from two very different theologians. Paul Tillich and Walter Rauschenbusch:

TILlich: The question arising out of this experience [the experience of disruption and meaninglessness] is not, as in the Reformation, the question of a merciful God and the forgiveness of sins; nor is it, as in the early Greek church, the question of finitude, of death and error; nor is it the question of the personal religious life or

of the Christianization of culture and society. It is the question of a reality in which the self-estrangement of our existence is overcome, a reality of reconciliation and reunion, of creativity, meaning and hope. We shall call such a reality "the New Being."

RAUSCHENBUSCH: To those whose minds live in the Social Gospel, the Kingdom of God is a dear truth, the marrow of the Gospel, just as the incarnation was to Athanasius, justification by faith alone to Luther, and the sovereignty of God to Jonathan Edwards.

It takes but little reflection on these passages to realize that there have always been theologies within theology, and that one theological approach differs from another in its impact because of the emphasis given to a controlling theme. So, for example, the stress placed on *praxis* by Latin American liberation theologians and the emphasis they give to the particular experiences of struggle for liberation in their countries very largely determine the direction of their theological work. There is something new, or almost new, in the historical situation that has molded them as theologians, but there is nothing new about the influence of experience on theological method and on the content of theology.

A great deal of theology has been determined by experience and by practical responsibilities rather than by deduction from well-established first principles. Was this not true of Luther and Wesley, of Schleiermacher and Barth? What would Reinhold Niebuhr's theology have been like without Detroit or Rauschenbusch's without the slums of "Hell's Kitchen" or Tillich's without World War I and the efforts to heal the broken culture that followed it?

Liberation and Transcendence

The liberation theme even if considerably expanded does not cover all of theology. It may be

JOHN C. BENNETT, Senior Contributing Editor of C&C and former president of Union Theological Seminary (NYC), now lives and teaches in California.

accompanied by the neglect of transcendence, by the neglect of grace, by the neglect of praise, by the neglect of continuing judgment upon all states of liberation. This need not be so, but in practice it often is so at least among many followers if not among the most creative theologians. The result of this is that whenever the liberation theme is mentioned controversy is provoked.

In this country we have had the Hartford statement answered by the Boston statement, and they are only the beginning. My sympathies are generally with the Boston statement though I wish it were less wordy and better organized. The Hartford statement has one concern that I share, the concern about transcendence.

Peter Berger and Richard Neuhaus were the chief inspirers of the Hartford statement, and two years ago I heard Berger give a lecture in which he said that by far the most important point that the Hartford people wanted to make was to call Christians back to greater emphasis on God's transcendence. There is evidence in the statement, however, and much more in the writings of both Berger and Neuhaus that they wanted to counteract liberation theology. I doubt if this was true of all the signers, but I am sure that as an event the Hartford statement was a polemical response to liberation theology.

The witness to transcendence does call attention to a central theological conviction that those who stress the liberation theme often neglect, though they need not do so. That theme should be a prayer to the liberating God who transcends all particular ideologies, movements and all achievements of liberation, who is revealed in Christ and is therefore not a vague supreme being or almighty who can easily be claimed by the human might.

One of the best ways of guarding against being swept along by trends is to become clearly aware of the history of trends. The history of theology is essential in helping us to realize that theological trends, much as they may contain true insights, will have their day and be followed by others.

Who can know this better than those of us who have been associated with Union Seminary over several decades? Early in my time we had the Social Gospel in quite vulnerable forms but as a bearer of essential truth that has never been abandoned within these walls. Then we had Christian realism, which began as a criticism of what were believed to be illusions in the view of humanity and of history associated with the Social Gospel. Then we went off in many directions, but there was a tendency on all sides to open doors that many people believed Christian realism had closed and to emphasize a more open future.

The liberation theme in its various aspects has reflected this tendency. Those concerned about it have kept saying:

Don't get stuck in the cold war or in an outlook controlled by the bias of white, North American males;

Look again at the biblical inspiration of a radically transforming justice that breaks through theological inhibitions;

Be less inhibited by historical skepticism about the gospels and reject the theological tendencies which made light of the explosive element in the life and teachings of Jesus;

Be as global in outlook and responsibility as ever but listen more to what Christians and their neighbors are saying on other continents;

To these I would add:

Be contemporary but do not be prisoners of the present.

Prepare for the future by learning to respond to the historical sources of revelation as living realities now; and never forget that throughout Christian history the one-sidedness of one theology and of one expression of Christian faith has been corrected by another—also perhaps one-sided.

Theologians and theological schools have a responsibility now both to respond to new and often emphatic bearers of truth and at the same time to do some anticipating of the next correctives—without waiting for some ideal Hegelian synthesis to appear and without cautiously marching down the middle of the road.

Blacks and Women

In the United States there are two expressions of the liberation theme in theology that are indigenous: black theology of liberation and the many-sided theology of the liberation of women.

James Cone has become clearer whenever he writes a book on the subject—and I hope that you will all read *The God of the Oppressed* if you have not done so—that for him blackness covers all forms of suffering from oppression. I suspect that blackness does not very clearly include the suffering of women. It does include other suffering American minorities and also the chronically poor white people of whom there still are so many millions in our midst. Cone has had so many ecumenical contacts that he has come to realize that blacks are a minority of non-whites who are oppressed in the world. Whether he makes enough room for the oppression of blacks by other blacks is a question, though the answer to it may lie in his general use of "black" and "white"—sometimes as colors that are physical and sometimes as signs of attitudes. He does not announce always when he is using these words one way or the other

and I suspect that he is never unhappy when those who are white in terms of physical color feel the lash of his rhetoric on the assumption that more often than not they deserve it!

There are other black theologians and many more who represent black liberation, but most of them have to define themselves in relation to James Cone. He has opened many eyes and he has applied a kind of moral coercion that has caused people to ask questions about their own blind spots that they had never asked before.

When I hear such representatives of the women's movement as Rosemary Ruether, Nelle Morton, Beverly Harrison and my wife, Anne Bennett, say that the liberation of women calls for the deepest of all changes, I think that I partly understand what they mean. Certainly to overcome the subordination of half the human race and to raise it to a position of equal dignity, opportunity and power—equal to that of the dominant males—would be—and I shall say *will be*—as pervasive a social revolution as we can imagine.

Those who are committed to this goal believe that it will change the balance of human qualities that control the use of power in the world, that power will be used with more sensitivity to humane values.

A stronger humane factor in the use of power would be a great blessing. As I see it we should begin by thinking not of the blessing that may come, but of the simple matter of justice to those who have been at the same time loved and treated as subordinate beings.

In the case of many forms of oppression and of dehumanizing ways of feeling and living, the church has been an accomplice. This is true of white racism and it is true of economic injustice and international imperialism. But in the case of the subordination and oppression of women the church has been a major *cause* of the oppression, a prime mover. It has been the prime preserver of this oppression through its theology, its liturgy and its ecclesiastical organization.

Latin Voices

If I now consider in somewhat greater detail the question of the significance of Latin American liberation theology for North American Christians, it is for the simple reason that I have given most thought to it, partly because of the accident of being involved in polemics about it.

North Americans have never in the past taken Latin American thought seriously. In fact they have not taken Latin America seriously except as a place from which quick profits can be extracted or on those

occasions when particular Latin American countries sting us a bit—Cuba, Panama, Mexico.

Latin American liberation theology grows out of the situations on that continent and is not a model for us in North America; it should be a stimulus and in some respects an inspiration, but not a model. But it also is no fad. We have many problems of our own. We must do our own thinking about theology, about social ethics and political strategy. We have resources and methods for social change that are not present in many Latin American countries.

We have immense problems of economic justice but neither Marxist views of class structure nor Marxist views of social and political strategy fit our situation. Our democratic political institutions are partly but only partly corrupted by our capitalistic economic institutions and do become instruments of greater justice. The enormous size of our middle class to which most people hope that they or their children may belong is another difference in our situation. The power and the conservatism of our industrial workers create opportunities and problems that are not present in Latin America.

As the liberation theologians have come to be known in this country they have stirred up many controversies. The chief one has been about the contention that they represent a return of naive utopianism with a tendency to absolutize the results of a Marxist revolution. The theologians seem to be aware of this danger. Gutierrez, for example, says in *A Theology of Liberation* that we should avoid "any confusion of the Kingdom with any one historical stage, any idolatry toward unavoidable ambiguous human achievement, any absolutizing of revolution," (p. 238). When a revolutionary struggle is on, whatever form it takes, it generates illusions, and within the church theologians and others should keep these under criticism. When the early liberation books were written there were doubtless tendencies that North American realists could spot as illusions. More recently, especially since the overthrow of Allende in Chile, I doubt if there are many who see utopias on the horizon. In many situations there are temptations to despair.

Now I shall give content to my statement that this theology should be a stimulus and in some respects an inspiration for our thinking and for our actions. I shall speak of this very briefly under six headings.

(1) This theology speaks to us with great force of the misery of most of the human race that is the result of injustice and oppression, of poverty and hunger. We all know about this intellectually but it is not on the ground floor of our theologies.

Gustavo Gutierrez says that "it is only in the last few years that people became clearly aware of

the scope of misery and especially of the oppressive and alienating circumstances in which the great majority of mankind exists. This state of affairs is offensive to man and therefore to God" (p. 60).

Human misery is not to be equated with economic and political oppression. When Pascal wrote of the misery of man he seemed to be especially impressed by the misery of kings who were bored if they were not diverted from thinking about themselves by playing games or chasing poor animals. There are times for dwelling on this and for comparing misery in suburbs with misery in inner cities. There are times for dwelling on the misery of people living in post-revolutionary situations that are cruel and arbitrary. These are outside the ken of this theology, but there are still times for emphasizing it.

There are times for examining critically the contention that the misery and deprivation of all the world's poor are the result of oppression by the world's more fortunate people. How much of this misery comes from forms of economic stagnation that are the result of indigenous cultural conditions? Gunnar Myrdal has a good deal to say about this as a factor in Asia. This subject is neglected except by those who seek to prove that the capitalist nations have no guilt for oppression.

For our purposes there is enough misery that is the result of callous indifference or profit-seeking oppression to give impetus to theologies of liberation. More careful analysis is needed, but efforts to get us off the hook are not needed. Recently there was a meeting of theologians from many countries of the Third World in Dar-es-Salaam. At that meeting one of the most admired Christians in Africa, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, said that the theology of liberation in Latin America is a sign of an awakening to the realities of life. Latin Americans, he said, have discovered that even with independence and Christianity, exploitation and oppression still prevail.

(2) This liberation theology comes from that part of the Third and Fourth Worlds most influenced by the Christian tradition, most articulate in terms of Christian theology and ethics. (The Philippines is the only exception.) The nearest approach so far as articulateness is concerned is probably India, where among the tiny minority of Christians considerable Christian thinking has been done about the problems of social justice, and especially about the political problems of nation-building. M. M. Thomas and his Institute of Religion and Society in Bangalore have developed what is in effect a literature of liberation.

(3) This body of Christian thought provides fresh stimulus and inspiration for our own thinking about

the biblical and theological bases for the radical Christian commitment to justice. (A few years ago in one of my courses in Berkeley I had seven Jesuits and every one of them had been radicalized by his experience of months or years in Latin America. I always have learned from my students, but I learned more than usual that quarter.)

Parallels and Precedents

Liberation theology today is in some respects in a line of succession from such representatives of the Social Gospel as Walter Rauschenbusch. The Social Gospel was a theology of liberation for the industrial workers of this country. These were chiefly white, male industrial workers. It is hard for us today to realize what a great achievement it was in our history to overcome the most oppressive exploitation of labor, to establish the right of labor to organize, to change the state from being the adversary to becoming the defender of this right.



These changes came as the result of a long and costly and courageous struggle that is almost forgotten today, though there has been a replay of it in the case of the farm workers. It was fitting that the Reinhold Niebuhr award was given to Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers Union, because Niebuhr was such a committed supporter of the industrial workers when they were at the same stage of struggle in which we find the farm workers today. Both the Protestant Social Gospel and the Roman Catholic teaching about social justice and identification with the industrial workers gave strong religious and moral support to their struggle.

Liberation theology resembles in many ways the thought and the initiatives of Reinhold Niebuhr in the early 1930s, especially the main emphases in his mind-changing early book *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. In both you find great emphasis on the injustice inherent in capitalism, on the reality of the class struggle, on the Marxist diagnosis of society and view of history and on the Marxist strategy for social change. Niebuhr later became disillusioned about Marxism and decided that other strate-

gies were called for in the United States, but to me it is fascinating to see how close his thought was in the early thirties to that of the liberation theologians. I see liberation theology as stirring us again and bringing us back in a more radical way that relates the present global situation to the concerns and impulses of those earlier periods that had lost their force.

I think that while *A Theology of Liberation* by Gustavo Gutierrez has been the most influential book representing this movement, probably the most useful overall view of it is José Miguez Bonino's *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (Fortress). Miguez is one of the presidents of the World Council of Churches. Another book, by José Miranda, helps us to understand better than the biblical scholars of Europe and North America do the biblical grounding of all struggles for justice, but its title, *Marx and the Bible*, may keep the scholars who need it most from reading it. I do not pretend to understand it all, and I do not agree with all the things that I do understand; but it massively presents the case for the identification of God with the cause of a transforming justice that for the most part the church has resisted or from which the church has diverted Christians to privatistic or bland forms of religion.

Dominance and Dependence

(4) Liberation theology is important for us in the US because it is in part addressed to us. It is addressed to us as the dominating power in the western hemisphere, the great power by which these theologians see their countries exploited or on which they feel an unwelcome dependence.

Dependence is for them a major theme, and they prefer the word *liberation* to the word *development* because they believe that what is most needed is liberation from dependence rather than development while being dependent. They see development as part of the agenda of the developed and rich and powerful nations with the form of it too much controlled by their multinational corporations. Gutierrez says that the "alert groups" in Latin America believe that there can be authentic development for Latin America "only if there is liberation from the domination exercised by the great capitalist countries, and especially by the most powerful, the United States" (p. 88).

The difference between the official American attitude toward the Cuban revolution and that of these Christian thinkers is most significant. Miguez Bonino, for example, says the following:

The triumph of the Cuban revolution marks a new time in Latin America. It indicates that the capitalist and imperialist system can be over-

come, even at a scanty 70 miles from the USA and the concerted effort of it and its satellites. In the 17 years that have elapsed we have learned that Castro's way of access to power cannot be copied everywhere, that the Cuban revolution is not a model to be reproduced. But it remains a sign that change is possible, however costly. An inroad has been opened in a system that must be subverted and changed. The hypocritical denunciation that Cuba has been "exporting" and "financing" revolution in the continent, frequently voiced by those who are actively engaged in exporting and financing repression, is certainly exaggerated. But it is true that Cuba has been the cradle of a new revolutionary consciousness in these lands.

It is enough to compare that with our Government's record: its attempt to strangle the Cuban revolution by embargo, its effort in connection with the Bay of Pigs to foment a counterrevolution, and the attempts by the CIA to assassinate Castro. Add to these the fact that Castro was forced to become completely dependent on the Soviet Union and then was condemned by us for being a Soviet satellite. This may well be seen in a few years to have been a chapter of folly and of shame. Fortunately we seem now to be moving away from it.

(5) Latin America is a promising area for working out viable relations between Christians and Marxists.



It is one of the tragedies of modern history that Marxism rejected religion, but I think we can see this as a judgment on the churches for their failure to respond to the demand for economic justice in the context of the industrial revolution. Today there is need of as much interaction between Christians and Marxists as possible. Christians still need to be prodded by Marxists in order to overcome distortions of their own faith. Marxist societies need Christianity as a source of inspiration and of correctives.

We have heard a good deal about dialogue between Christians and Marxists on the theoretical level in Europe. Milan Machovec's *A Marxist Looks at Jesus*, one of the finest fruits of this exchange, will be a resource for Christians. In Latin America we find less theoretical dialogue and more cooperation in the same political struggles. Also, in Latin America Marxists are more open than they are where Marxist regimes are dominated by hardened orthodoxes. It is important, too, that they are so far away from the Russian army.

It is fascinating to read some of the things said by both Castro and Che Guevara about Christianity. They have said things that Marx or Lenin could not have said, Marx patronized religion. Lenin hated religion. Castro especially has discovered the fact that there is a prophetic element in Christianity and that many Christians are deeply committed to liberation. After his visit to Chile a few years ago he said: "We had many things to talk about with 'the Christian left'—many things which are not the result of opportunism but of convictions, not the result of seeking advantages but of deep reasons, of principles." He also said that some Christians have been persecuted in their social struggles and others have died, like Camillo Torres. He said: "In fact if we analyze things objectively . . . we must appreciate in its full value the importance of this awakening of a political consciousness of large masses of Christians on this continent."

Some of you may think that Castro's only interest in these Christians is that he wants to be able to use them. Perhaps so, but my interest in his attitude is that it goes with an openness of mind toward aspects of Christianity that were hidden from Marx and Lenin and, I am sure, Mao Tse-tung.

I do not wish to have Christians co-opted by Marxist movements on the terms of those movements. We knew something of that many years ago in many circles in this country. What I am hoping is that liberation theology can keep its independent base, that Christians and Marxists can learn from each other and that each can be different as they cooperate in the struggle against massive injustice and repression. Marxism is not welcomed by many of our countrymen, but it will not go away. It should not go away until its work is done. Part of its work has been and will be pressure on Christians and churches.

The Catholic Renewal

(6) Liberation theology is one aspect of a changed Roman Catholic Church in Latin America that should be an encouragement to us as we think of the future of the church in the world. It is supported by many Protestants, but in the main quite naturally it is a Catholic phenomenon. A generation ago it was a commonplace that the Catholic Church in Latin America was an obscurantist, socially reactionary and intolerant church. In some countries Protestants knew it as a persecuting church. Today while it remains a mixture of old and new I think that we may regard it as one of the most admirable parts of the church. It has changed so much that we can hope that even our churches can change.

This change is seen on at least two levels. In some

countries, notably in Chile and Brazil but in quite a number of others, the official church has for years been the defender of the human rights of all people, not only the rights of Christians or Catholics, against repressive governments. This is in itself extraordinary because of its own record of intolerance of dissent in the past. Even the church of Spain has changed in this respect. Miracle of miracles, it has become an agent of change in Spain, when so recently it had the spirit of the Inquisition.

On another level many priests and lay people and a number of bishops are committed to the kind of liberation that these theologians seek. They can regard Pope Paul's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* as a launching pad for liberation movements even though it does not go as far as they would. The same is true of reports of a conference of bishops from the whole continent in Medellin in 1968. How did an intolerant church come to be the chief defender of the human rights of all persons? And how did a church that had been the instrument of reactionary oligarchies and the religious sanction for the false consciousness that accepted the unjust status quo as ordained by providence become the seedbed for revolutionary movements of liberation? We have here to do with a real miracle of the Spirit.

When we look about our churches in this country and note as we sometimes do that they are in a period of blandness and of confusion, that they need to be shaken out of ruts, it should give us hope to see churches in other countries that have been shaken out of ruts that may have been even deeper. One thing I have always taught: The church is not what it seems to be in any one time or place. It is always the bearer of the sources of its own transformation. It even carries under the surface explosive materials. God revealed in Christ, working through the Spirit, surprises by invading the church to make it new again. One of the most important effects of ecumenical experience is that what happens to change the church anywhere is a resource for the church everywhere. □

Book Publishing

Book

Manuscripts invited for prompt editorial review and terms of publication. All categories invited including scholarly works. Professional editing, design and production plus expert promotion and distribution since 1920. Send manuscript or inquiry, or call (215) 642-8303. Ask for free Authors' Guide R-1.

DORRANCE & COMPANY
35 Cricket Tr., Ardmore, Pa. 19003

Context Affects Content

The Rootedness of All Theology

Robert McAfee Brown

CONSIDERABLE APPREHENSION is being expressed by many North American churchpersons that the faith once delivered to the saints is being eroded away by new theologies based on contemporary experience in certain limited contexts (Latin American liberation theologians being the chief target). Such new expressions are faulted for being too subjectively arrived at and overly influenced by a specific set of social, political and economic conditions that are not universal enough to form the basis for an authentic Christian expression.

It is in response to such charges that the following ten propositions are offered as sequential steps in affirming the value of experiential-contextual theologies.

(1) *All theologies are contextually conditioned.* Theologies emerge out of a certain set of experiences, or out of a particularized historical context. It has always been so. To discover a new group of theologies based on a particularized set of experiences (in this case poverty, race, class, etc.) should in principle be neither surprising nor threatening.

Early Christians theologized in relation to questions raised in Alexandria or Constantinople, and their descriptions of the faith varied depending on whether they were preaching and writing in Alexandria or in Constantinople. Almost all who did this (at least according to surviving records) were males, and they were usually from among the intelligentsia rather than the working class. When the centers of theological concern moved north from Alexandria and west from Constantinople, the ways of doing theology were conditioned in new ways by the structure of the Latin language; abstractions became common, replacing the dynamic of earlier Hebraic forms. The medieval church used Aristotle as a way to shape theology, and this, too, affected the nuances of its content.

Further examples are plentiful. The context and

experience of the theologian are an important filter through which a theology receives expression.

(2) *There is nothing wrong with theology being contextually conditioned.* There is no way in which a historical faith (one that has received embodiment in specific times and places) could be expressed other than through the cultural norms and patterns in which it is located. If it did not do so, it would fail to communicate. If it did not do so, it would not be historical.

The incarnation, for example, is a highly "contextual-experiential" event. Jesus was not an abstract instance of humankind—he was a first-century Jew with little formal education, who lived in a certain place and never traveled far from it, who thought David wrote all the Psalms, who expected the imminent end of the world, spoke Aramaic, got hungry, and was thus part and parcel of the context in which he lived. The Word really was "made flesh," i.e., given real, historical, concrete, contextual, human embodiment. The Word did not appear as an "eternal principle," or a philosophical abstraction.

So in the very nature of the case it is not wrong to conceive of theology as contextually conditioned. What is wrong is our failure to acknowledge the contextual condition of theology, particularly *our* theology. We want to believe that ours is the "true" theology, one that is not contaminated by cultural importations, so that imperfect or inadequate theological statements can be detected by the degree to which they depart from our norm. The history of theology is studded with attempts to pull this off, whether the pure norm is the "perennial philosophy" of St. Thomas, or dogmas defined as irreformable and hence unchanging, or the precise formulations of the Book of Concord, or the uncritically venerated Westminster Standards.

Mirrors That Speak

(3) *It may take others to show us how conditioned, parochial or ideologically captive our own theology is.* We find it much easier to perceive the "time-bound" character of theologies other than our own.

ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN, a Contributing Editor, teaches ecumenics and World Christianity at Union Theological Seminary (NYC). Last spring he traveled extensively in Latin America, and he has just returned from a visit to Cuba.

We want to believe that we are free (at least more so than certain others we could mention) from ideological taint or contextual conditioning, and it often takes others in the Christian family to point out our unconscious self-deception.

This was brought home to me in a series of exchanges at the Detroit 1975 Conference on Theology in the Americas. After about three days, one of the South American theologians said to some of us, "Why is it that when you talk about *our* position it is always 'Latin American theology,' but when you talk about *your* position it is always 'theology'?" He had a perception that had been hidden from us. Our implicit assumption, which we would have explicitly disavowed, was that we did in fact have the normative theological position, and that what was being served up from below the equator was a cultural and geographical deviant—interesting to be sure, but clearly the captive of a whole bagful of contextually conditioned assumptions, of which we were, of course, free.

The knife cuts both ways. It took North American women at the same conference to point out to the Latin American men that their liberation theology was still incredibly *macho*, and that while they wanted to liberate all sorts of people, women were not yet among them. And if North Americans objected that Marxist assumptions were implicit in the social analysis of Third World theologies, it was only fair that South Americans pointed out the leavening of North American theology with capitalist, middle-class assumptions.

(4) *It is the task of ecumenical dialogue to acquaint us not only with "the truth" but also with the truth about ourselves.* We should not deplore the fact that others acquaint us with the ideological blinders around our interpretation of the Gospel; we should glory in it, for they are freeing us for a more responsible response to, and interpretation of, that Gospel. We never have a *full* grasp of the meaning of the faith; we need help, for it is a faith that, while always expressed in certain contexts, is never exhaustively understood by the interpretive filter of one context.

So ecumenical responsibility today means listening to Christians in situations different from ours—not so that their viewpoints can come to dominate us, but so that by reflecting together we can both see what are the limiting factors in our separate visions and come through such exchange to closer approximation of the real vision.

We will need to listen to nonChristians as well, for they may tell us things hidden from all Christian perceptions. It is important to reflect on the view others have of us, however unfair we think it, that is embodied in such a statement as "When the white man came to Africa we had the land and he had the

Bible. Now he has the land and we have the Bible."

If we submit ourselves to the discipline of listening to perspectives different from ours, we earn the right to speak as well, and genuine dialogue can take place.

(5) *The dialogical challenge comes more sharply today than before.* In many quarters of the American church there is resistance to confronting the themes of contextualized theology, particularly when it has "liberation" overtones. The reasons for this reluctance may be deeper than we are comfortable about admitting, namely, that the new theological voices issue a sharp challenge both to the adequacy of the old theological positions and to the socio-political-economic perspectives associated with those positions. The initial terms of the dialogue, in other words, are threatening.

The threats are apparent in terms of both methodology and content. Our own theologies are sometimes described in these exchanges as being those of a capitalist or imperialist or racist or class culture, with the implication that those theologies have served to bolster and support the status quo, which perpetuates a system of massive injustice. It is charged that we are answering the wrong questions; whereas we have the luxury to debate about the difficulty of belief, most of the human family faces the difficulty of sheer survival, and theology must center on that concern. Our interlocutors are non-believers; *theirs* are non-persons, i.e., those whom society "marginates," declares disposable and turns into expendable objects.

Consequently, many of the new theological voices are saying that we must start with the plight of the oppressed—the poor, the minorities, the dispossessed. In such a process, tools of social analysis turn out to be useful for descriptive purposes; but these tools likewise threaten middle-class sensibilities, since they are sometimes Marxist analysis of class struggle, stressing the polarity between oppressor and oppressed.

Such challenges are sharp, uncomfortable and threatening, but they are widely voiced and they demand attention.

Recovering the 'View from Below'

(6) *Is there continuity or discontinuity between these new theological currents and the positions to which we have been accustomed?* Suppose there is (a degree of) legitimacy in the charge that our theologies are captives of a certain middle-class, bourgeois, "Western" perspective that does not take seriously enough the plight of the poor. Can we purge our theologies of whatever degree of illegitimate co-

option has taken place and work in discernible continuity with new perspectives? Or are we so "captivated" that a radical break is called for?

One response is to say that the questions raised by the new contextual theologies are not legitimate theological questions, so that the new concerns can be either ignored or scorned. Another response would be to look for points within our own theological tradition where concern for the dispossessed has received some expression, and to examine the possibility that such concern is recoverable within our own framework.

The following examples could be the subject of further study: (a) the truly radical "church against the world" stance of pre-Constantinian Christianity, and reasons for the erosion of that original impetus; (b) the left-wing "radical sects" of the Reformation that have received so little attention in comparison to the Lutheran and Calvinist traditions; (c) the Social Gospel movement of the late 19th and early 20th century in the United States, which foreshadowed so many concerns of recent liberation theologies; (d) the attraction to socialism of such major figures in recent European theology as Karl Barth and Paul Tillich; (e) the implication of Bonhoeffer's conclusion after 10 years of resistance to Hitler, that the recovery of "the view from below" is what is important for all of us:

There remains an experience of incomparable value. We have for once learnt to see the great events of world history from below, from the perspective of the outcasts, the suspects, the maltreated, the powerless, the oppressed, the reviled—in short, from the perspective of those who suffer We have to learn that personal suffering is a more effective key, a more rewarding principle for exploring the world in thought and action than personal good fortune. . . . (*Letters and Papers from Prison*, new greatly enlarged edition, Macmillan, New York, 1971, p. 17.)

To the degree that we could take Bonhoeffer seriously, it might be possible to effect a *transformation*, rather than a sheer discontinuity or easy continuity, between where we have been and where so many others now are.

(7) *Scripture may be our most important point of contact.* Much of the social analysis of contextual theologies (whether done by Latin Americans, women, blacks, Asians, or whoever) yields a picture of the world different from that of the various "received" theologies of the recent past. However, both the contextual theologies and the "received" theologies are in close touch with Scripture. The fact that they are finding different things in Scripture should not be a cause of dismay but of hope, since, as John Robertson said centuries ago, "God has yet more

truth to break forth from his holy Word." An important result of a study of contextual theologies will be the deeper acquaintance with Scripture that will result. One cannot read Gutierrez, Bonino, Cone, Ruether, Miranda or Koyama without having, with them, to move back and forth between Scripture and context, context and Scripture.

To be ecumenically responsible today is to seek to understand others' perspectives in biblical terms, and also their perspective on the Bible itself. What emerges can be a new appreciation for us of the degree to which the Bible itself was written *out of* the experience of oppressed people, *by* oppressed people as a message for the liberation *of* oppressed people. The theme need not be developed here beyond noting that certain passages have emerged as central in this recovery of Scripture: the Exodus story, Jeremiah 22:13-16, the prophets read almost at random, Matthew 25:31-46, Luke 1:46-55, Luke 4:16-30 (a crucial passage), and so on. A forthcoming book by Jose Miranda, *Being and the Messiah* (to be published by Orbis Books), will develop some of the liberation themes of the Fourth Gospel, while an example of lay insight into these matters is found in Ernesto Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname* (Orbis Books).

If it is objected that concentration on "the liberation of the oppressed" represents a selective reading of Scripture, we must at least concede that our own attempts to create "a canon within the canon" have often protected interests of our own, such as an *avoidance* of the theme of the liberation of the oppressed. To me, at any rate, such passages as the above seem increasingly to be not only consistent with the overall biblical message but also to represent its central thrust. I thus have to engage in what Juan Luis Segundo (in *The Liberation of Theology*) calls a "hermeneutical suspicion," i.e., a distrust of my previous reading of Scripture, to the degree that such reading concealed from me some of the radical implications of the biblical message for our day.

The hermeneutical principle involved here seems to me analogous to Barth's massive treatment of the doctrine of election in *Church Dogmatics*, II/2. In the preface to that volume he states that he had expected to follow his master Calvin in dealing with predestination, but that when he reread Calvin, and reread Holy Scripture, it was clear that they were saying different things and that Scripture had to reinterpret Calvin rather than vice-versa. Similarly today, with the fresh insights into Scripture that are coming to us out of the exegesis of oppressed people, we need to compare that rediscovered biblical message with what *our* culturally conditioned

theologies have done with that message, and give the former a chance to challenge the latter.

The Ties of Tradition

(8) *We can take the same kind of critical look at our own traditions.* To what degree have the theologies, creeds, dogmas, liturgies and lifestyles of western Christendom been shaped and made captive by the cultural situations out of which they come, so that they have (to some degree at least) obscured the gospel that originally gave rise to them? One of the "liberating" things in recent Roman Catholicism has been a fresh recognition that there are *various* cultural inputs to an understanding of "the Catholic faith," and that these can mutually correct and thus enrich one another. (A stunning symbol of this to me was the fact that when mass was celebrated at Vatican II according to one of the Eastern Rites or by an African bishop, there was need for an interpreter to explain over a loudspeaker to the other 2300 bishops just what was taking place at the altar—this to the leaders of a church that described itself as having a "universal liturgy.")

The value in the exercise of rethinking and re-evaluating our past and present is precisely that a more ecumenical theology can emerge, a theology that is responding to the full contribution of the whole *oikoumene* and not just a small portion of it (Latin Christianity, Continental Protestantism, Latin American Catholicism, etc.). Since we are all too selective in those parts of Scripture and tradition that we emphasize, wider exposure to other strands can only be beneficial, once we have come to terms with the initial threat of such openness.

(9) *Only in creative tension with the widest possible perspective can we develop theologies appropriate to our own particular situations.* The task is not to recreate "a universal theology." That would be a new idolatry. The task is to create theologies that speak to our own situations, but are not so molded by those situations that they do no more than recapitulate them. To the degree that our own perspectives are informed by the whole *oikoumene*—which today means a new attention to contextual theologies—we can more responsibly create a theology for North America, and in the process draw on our cultural and historical resources without becoming captive to them.

We are not to import other theologies wholesale, as though Gutierrez were the new Aquinas, or Miguez Bonino the new Wesley; nor are we to lift categories of social analysis uncritically from Europe or Uruguay. We are to see how our Christian brothers and sisters have been doing theology in their situ-

ations so that we can get clues from them about how to do it in ours, listening also to what they, from their vantage points, can tell us about ourselves that we may be unable to see clearly without their help.

Such a theology will be ecumenically nourished and locally applied. It will have the inclusiveness of the wisdom of the whole people of God, and yet it will breathe the diversity of our own peculiar location within that people. It will arise from and speak to our own American experience, precisely because our engagement with that experience will be informed by an ecumenical perspective gathered from the theological sensitivities of others.

Theology Needs Native Soil

Robert Bellah points out in *The Broken Covenant* that one reason socialism failed to capture US imagination was an inherent Yankee suspicion about ideas, vocabularies and leaders imported wholesale from Europe. Such concern, he argued, must be articulated in terms drawn from the distinctively American experience if they are to gain a true hold here. There may be a similar lesson if we are to talk about a North American theology. The decision of the American Catholic bishops to make "liberty and justice for all" their bicentennial theme is a case in point. The theme could get an initial hearing, drawn as it was from the sacred scriptures of the American heritage and deeply embedded in the heart of every American child who has gone to public school. And yet the implications of the study became threatening or liberating to many Catholics when it was discovered that in the US there is *not* "liberty and justice for all" but only for a few, and that the institutional church, whether Catholic or Protestant, has been a bulwark in maintaining rights for the few rather than the many. Similarly, exploration of a word like "justice" in the light of the Hebrew scriptures makes possible new depths of understanding of the American dream.

A theological exploration of the theme of power would yield a similar conclusion about inclusiveness and diversity. Power is a universal problem, but what we are to do about it can vary immensely according to our situations. For Ernesto Cardenal's fisherfolk in Solentiname the problem is to *acquire* power, since they have none and are therefore constantly exploited; for citizens of the US the problem is to *share* power, since we have too much.

The wider the resources of insight available to us to deal with such problems, the more responsibly can we think and act in our immediate situations.

(10) *The church has unique resources to engage in*

this task creatively. What is being discussed in these pages involves a high degree of threat. Accustomed ways of thinking will be challenged, interpretation of the past and present will need reexamination, and finally, lifestyles and value orientations will be placed under critical scrutiny. Not many North Americans, for example, are going to agree that we should divest ourselves of some of our power. But within the church—or at least a remnant of the church—such notions should be entertainable, i.e., in a context where ultimate loyalties are not to nation, race or class, but to the entire global family which the church embodies.

To be open to risk and threat is to be open to the possibility of change. This should have a familiar ring, as the gospel has always had at its heart the imperative of *metanoia*, of repentance, turning about, beginning again. The question finally is always how open we can be to the transforming power of the gospel, when that transformation threatens our present securities. And it should be pointed out that for theologians, theological *metanoia* is probably the most difficult task of all. To take seriously the challenge of contextual theologies is to place our

theological securities on the line, and finally the personal commitments that lie behind them. To the degree that theology is only “the second act” as Gutierrez insists, or our attempt to think through the commitments we already have, the ability to entertain new theologies will also be the ability to entertain new possibilities of commitment at the deepest levels of our being.

That demands a community in which individual apprehensions and insecurities can find support during what may be painful spiritual surgery. The sustenance furnished by the ecumenical community is an essential framework within which the challenges of various portions of that community to one another can be honestly heard. New contextual theologies are not “a challenge to the integrity of the gospel” as some have averred, but a challenge to our *understanding* of the integrity of the gospel, which is sometimes very different.

So to listen to the new voices, to take seriously what a study of contextual theologies might mean for our own theologies and for our own lives, is not to run the risk of fragmenting the Christian gospel. It is to engage in the task of putting it back together.

Readers' Responses:

Homosexuality and the Church

TO THE EDITOR: Your issue on homosexuality (May 30 – June 13), with so much truth and helpfulness, is characterized most obviously by disregard of Scripture. Ms. Way claims to write of “theology” without a single reference to the Bible. Ms. Krody, though she does not say so outright, clearly has no patience for biblical Christianity, which is undeniably sexist. The other writers’ themes do not call for references to Scripture, except for Mr. Espy’s knowledgeable and forthright statement—a breath of fresh air to a biblically-oriented Christian like myself!

Nor am I unaware of the difficulties of discriminating between biblical “no-nos” rooted in cultural situations and therefore of limited validity, and those mandatory for us here and now. The debate over the ordination of women, which divides us “conservative evangelicals,” bears witness to that. But to place the ban on homosexual practice in that category is to be blind to its roots and force in the biblical tradition. It seems to me that Dr. Nelson’s position leads straight into the fallacy of judging Scripture instead of being judged by it . . .

The hate directed against “gays” by “straight” Christians makes one wince; that is as contrary to Scripture as homosexual practice. . . . But to “hate the sin and not the sinner,” though not easy and not often accomplished, is still the way of Jesus, who spoke so scathingly of the Pharisees but did not hate them. And when the church denies, or explains away, the clear and strong denunciation of homosexual practice in the Bible, it is compromising its own integrity. . . .

BANES ANDERSON
Fresno, California

TO THE EDITOR: . . . I think [homosexuality] is chiefly a distortion or perversion of the flow of nature (and spirit) in that most homosexuality is an unwillingness to accept and affirm one’s own sexuality. It is an attempt to keep open the option of being the opposite sex. By this I mean it is a way whereby a man keeps open the possibility (in fantasy) of being a woman in sexual response (or vice versa for a woman). Nature says it is not possible for a male to be a female. But maleness is more than

birth as a male. It is a positive acceptance (and affirmation) psychologically of what one is physically.

In some 30 years of personal counseling, I have experienced most homosexuality as a conflict in identity, such as a male not being willing or able to affirm or accept maleness. If one fails to affirm one's sex given by nature, then all the other identities are up for grabs such as ethnic group, race, regionality, etc. . . .

As for ordaining homosexuals (or lesbians) we are (in primitive terms) making a person potent. To put the blessing of the church on an impotent person does not bestow potency. The ordination of homosexuals to ministry is an act of affirming them as affirmers of persons. If they dis-affirm their own being, how can one of them affirm me in my struggle to be? . . .

MYRON C. MADDEN
President
Greater New Orleans
Federation of Churches
New Orleans, La.

TO THE EDITOR: Congratulations and much appreciation for your issue on homosexuality and the James Nelson article in a previous issue. They are superb articles and of great use to numbers of people beginning for the first time to think carefully about this issue. . . .

ROBERT A. RAINES
Director, Kirkridge
Bangor, Pa.

TO THE EDITOR: There is one issue related to the ordination of homosexuals that I have not seen in public. I want to emphasize that I am speaking for myself and not for A.D.

It seems exceedingly odd to me that the issue should have become focused around ordination. For is it not true (except in the case of the recent ordination of a lesbian to the Episcopal priesthood) that every unmarried minister, male or female, is implicitly assumed to be celibate? The assumption may well be false in many cases, as we all know. But I do not think an association or presbytery would be likely to ordain a heterosexual who openly declared that he or she was living out of wedlock with a sexual partner.

This is to say that it seems to me illogical in the extreme for avowed, practicing homosexuals to demand ordination without at the same time affirming a lifetime commitment to a single sexual partner. And for the church to grant their demand without requiring such an affirmation would be to grant gays a license that is denied straights.

The prior question, then, is that of homosexual marriage. The church does not often solve its most emotional issues logically. But it seems to me that this aspect of the issue should at least be part of the debate.

MAYO Y. SMITH
Managing Editor
A.D. Magazine
New York, N.Y.

TO THE EDITOR: Yesterday I read the C&C special issue on homosexuality literally from cover to cover,

trying to take a fair and informed attitude to practices which are to me deeply abhorrent. (And, after living in the Orient for 30 years, and dealing with students, this is not a new subject to me.)

Suddenly I felt rising in myself a deep conviction that we have lost perspective on the whole question by concentrating on homosexuality—which happens to be only one of many forms of sexual activity by which a man or woman (may) become entrapped as hopelessly as by addiction to alcohol or drugs.

As a sociologist or an anthropologist one can make a cool-headed assessment in such matters. As a Christian (and that not in a formal sense, but in the sense of a total devotion to Jesus as "the pioneer of life"), however, there is a clear call to battle against *lust in any form*. See Matthew 5:27-28. The powerful conversion of Augustine, when he encountered the eighth chapter of Romans, is a genuine Christian conversion, and is an experience open to all who love the Lord, whether the temptation from which one breaks away is sex-related or not. . . .

ALFORD CARLETON
Pleasant Hill, Tenn.

TO THE EDITOR: I want to express my gratitude for your special issue on homosexuality. As a Commissioner to the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church trying to understand one of the issues of the assembly, namely homosexuality, I feel better prepared to make an informed decision after reading the current issue.

(REV.) CARL H. LENZ JR.
Alden, N.Y.

Cards and Letters



Standards in the Middle East

TO THE EDITOR: The May 16th issue of C&C carries an article by Edmund R. Hanauer, entitled "A Single Standard in the Middle East." I have seen quite a few pronouncements of this kind, some of them in respectable periodicals. The Hanauer article, though, by its slanted and invidious method of wilfully misrepresenting facts, seems to strive for new heights of venom and outright hate, possibly self-hate.

I could easily refute Hanauer's slanders one by one. Suffice it to mention one or two of the more blatant:

"Israel is not expected to abide by the Partition Resolution, etc." It is, of course, a well-known fact, heavily substantiated by official UN documentation, that it was Arabs—Palestinians, the Arab States, et al.,—who not merely did not abide by

that Resolution, but who militarily attempted to overthrow it, and by so doing, to prevent the establishment of a Jewish and an Arab State.

"Israeli bombs and shells falling on refugee camps, etc." Mr. Hanauer underestimates the intelligence of C&C's readers: To write thus, a few months after the bloody civil war in Lebanon, when the world now knows [about] and has seen photos of those innocent "refugee camps," full with arms caches, training facilities, military installations, etc., is, to say the least, somewhat off the mark and raises a serious question of the author's integrity.

Another point is the author's consistent confusing of the Palestine Liberation Organization with the Palestinians. By now, I assume, most people know, and certainly the knowledgeable readers of C&C, that these two are just NOT the same. The PLO is a self-confessed terror organization, while Palestinians are the group of Arabs connected with the land that was defined by the British Mandate by the name Palestine, loaned from the Roman period, comprising the entire area between the Mediterranean and the Arabian desert, i.e., both banks of the river Jordan.

As a reader of C&C, I must confess I am quite unsure I understand the editorial reasoning behind opening its pages to this low-level kind of malicious writing.

MICHAEL PRAGAI
Advisor on Church Relations
in North America,
Consulate General
of Israel in New York

TO THE EDITOR: Edmund R. Hanauer's article is all the more remarkable since it was written by a political scientist. In his quest for a single standard of justice, the following is merely a sampling of the questions that he may wish to explore:

—What was the Jewish population in Arab countries in 1947 and how many are left in each Arab country today and why?

—What Arab countries permit Jews to live inside their territories?

—How many Jews were killed by Arab terrorists in Jaffa in 1921? ... in Arab strikes and riots between 1936 and 1939? ... in the slaughter in Gush Etzion on the West Bank, the explosion in Ben Yehuda Street in Jerusalem, the attack on the Jewish Agency—all in early 1948?

—How many innocent Jewish civilians have been killed in random attacks by terrorists in and out of Israel since then?

—Have Arab UN delegations ever voted for an investigation into human rights violations in their own countries?

—How many Palestinian Arab refugees have been resettled and given citizenship in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and the Gulf states?

Mr. Hanauer appears to be the naive victim of the most insidious and simplistic propaganda. Can one who has not learned to explore sources and distinguish fantasy from reality lecture others?

GEORGE SAUER
South Orange, N.J.

Reply:

My article asks the use of a single standard in judging the Arab-Israeli conflict. I will try to use the same criterion here.

(1) It is true that the Arabs rejected the UN Partition Plan and sought to overturn its provisions by force. It is equally true that Israel has rejected and continues to reject various UN resolutions, including the Partition Plan Resolution, and that Israel sustains its rejection by military means. If one side's violations are to be condemned, so should the other's.

(2) It is true that some, not all, refugee camps contain arms and are used for military training. It is also true that air attacks on these camps kill civilians in large numbers. My point was that such tactics used by Israelis are to be condemned equally with similar tactics used by Palestinians.

(3) The PLO, as Mr. Pragai surely knows, is an umbrella group comprising many Palestinian organizations, including guerrilla units. Given the stateless existence of the Palestinians, the PLO is at least as representative of them as the Irgun, the Haggadah and the Jewish Agency were of the Jews in Palestine before Israel became a state.

(4) Mr. Pragai does not respond to the point in my article regarding the confiscation of Arab lands and the razing of Arab villages. We Jews are commended by God not to "... covet your neighbor's house, his fields ... or anything at all that is your neighbor's."

(5) In a letter of little more than 300 words Mr. Pragai compresses a number of ad hominem attacks; his oversupply of epithets suggests a dearth of arguments. To touch on one accusation only:

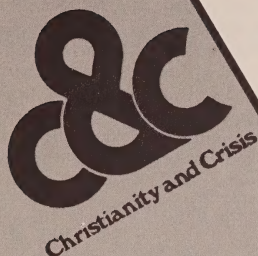
There are humanistic Jews and chauvinistic Jews. So also among Arabs. If those Jews and Palestinians who believe in justice and equality are "self-haters," then what hope is there of peace?

As for Mr. Sauer, the article he is attacking nowhere denied that Arabs have inflicted injustices, even atrocities, on Jews; nor did it seek to excuse such actions. My point was, rather, that many Americans exhibit a double standard—for example, by condemning Arab terrorist attacks which kill Israeli civilians, but not Israeli terrorist attacks which kill Arab civilians; or by condemning Iraqi discrimination against Jews, but not Israeli discrimination against Palestinians.

If Mr. Sauer means that we should condemn atrocities on both sides, then we are wholly in agreement, and I would only suggest that he read any article more closely before attacking it. I hope his point is not that two wrongs make a right, although the thrust of his remarks suggests that conclusion.

Finally, Mr. Sauer asks how many Palestinians have been resettled and given citizenship in Arab lands. The answer is mixed, although on balance negative. But since most Palestinians want to return to Israel/Palestine rather than to be resettled in some foreign land, Israel's denial of the right of return for Palestinians remains a major cause of the Middle East conflict and violates both international law and Jewish ethics.

EDMUND R. HANAUER



**THE PERSECUTION OF WITCHES:
A CASE OF SEXISM AND AGISM?**

Rosemary Ruether

JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

GREGORY BAUM AND TRACY EARLY

viewpoint/
THE MIDDLE EAST

Arthur J. Moore

REVIEW/ GOD IN PUBLIC

Vol. 34, No. 22, December 23, 1974; 45 cents a copy

THE MIDDLE EAST

THE RECENT PALESTINE debate at the United Nations, highlighted by the dramatic appearance of Yasir Arafat and the attendant public demonstrations, points up vividly the power of myth in our public life and the wracking psychic tension when allegories of life clash head on.

For those of us in the United States particularly, the symbolism of the exile's return combined with that of the sturdy pioneers conquering the land and building a new society blessed by God is the central myth of our society. Add to this absorption of the homeless and despised from other countries and the powerful fuel of guilt for our own treatment of Jews in Western and Christian society, and it is no surprise that there has always been in this country a strong feeling for Israel quite apart from either Government policy or supposed Israeli lobby. The presuppositions of the existence of Israel are in many ways also our own.

For much of the world, however, the presuppositions are quite different. Not only for the Palestinian Arabs who have announced that they do not intend to be the "red Indians" for the Israeli settlers but for much of the Third World whose history of colonialism gives them a jaundiced view of settler regimes, the Western-Israeli myth has only negative connotations. Their myth is of indigenous peoples coming at long last into their heritage and casting off the yoke of the oppressor.

It is immediately apparent that these myths overlap to a certain degree and both are explanations of life with which persons of good will—and certainly those with a belief in divine justice—can and must empathize. Indeed, it is the outsider's dilemma that he/she must be sympathetic to both.

It is no denigration of the truth, nevertheless, to remember that what is needed so desperately now in the Middle East is somewhat less of the passion inspired by myth and somewhat more of the pragmatism necessary to find a solution. Such a solution may be labeled interim, but if it has enough realism to commend it, the "interim" might last

for a while, and that would be a blessed relief to all concerned.

Such a settlement is obviously not going to please any of the parties involved very much. For the Palestinians it will involve recognizing that Israel is a fact, and in that sense we are all *de facto* Zionists at this point in time. For the Israelis it will mean recognizing that their existence is a political and not a theological fact, that their only ultimate security is political (not military) and that they cannot unilaterally decide who their opposite numbers will be. In today's world today's terrorists are often tomorrow's statesmen. This is a fact that Israelis should be conscious of, since some of their political leaders were once called "terrorists" also. On the other hand, Palestinian Arabs must learn the art of making the transition. There are already some signs that the PLO is trying to get the process underway.

Equally important is a realization by the US and USSR that they must use their power for constructive purposes and not simply to advance their own supposed interests. The US, for example, must see that it is no service either to Israel or to ourselves to have Israel as a dependent client, totally isolated from the rest of the world. Even the USSR, which might feel that it is sitting in the Middle East catbird seat, should begin to realize that it can reap greater benefits from a settlement than from manipulation for its own ends.

It is unclear as this is written whether the Vladivostok summit dealt with these problems at all. Let us pray that it did. For if the bankers and the arms suppliers do not agree on some formulation, however unsatisfactory, there is little hope that the participants will come to terms.

According to some reports, Vladivostok did produce an agreement strikingly similar to the original UN plan of 1947, with Israeli withdrawal to earlier borders and Arab recognition of Israel's existence. Presumably coupled with this would be some form of joint administration of Jerusalem and international (read US-USSR) guarantee of the settlement.

There is a certain grisly irony that talk of the original 1947 proposals should surface again after 27 years of turmoil and death. All that blood for so little! But that may be our best hope for peace in the Middle East—that all the killing will choke us all so much with blood that everyone will settle for whatever they can get. Otherwise, the myths (true and beautiful as they are) may lead us all to death.

ARTHUR J. MOORE

THE PERSECUTION OF WITCHES: A CASE OF SEXISM AND AGISM?

Rosemary Ruether

THOSE WHO HAVE DIPPED into the strange history of witch persecution in Western Christianity are aware that the official stereotype of the witch established by the prosecutors, and the artistic representation, is that of an old woman. The witch is seen as a "hag," much as she still is today in our halloween art.

Feminists have recently been uncovering some connections between witch persecution and sexism, but to my knowledge none have concentrated on the combination of sexism and agism in this picture—the witch not merely as female but as an *old* female. Careful studies of the witch persecutions in the 16th and 17th centuries in Germany, England and elsewhere have shown that the popular stereotype determined to a large extent the actual victims. Although children and young girls often appeared among those "possessed" by witchcraft, the overwhelming number of victims were, in fact, old women, particularly after the middle of the 15th century when prosecutors' manuals and the spreading of printing and engraving disseminated this image popularly.

In these brief remarks I do not expect to provide a comprehensive account of the sociology of this stereotype, but I hope to list a series of aspects linking agism, sexism and the demonic that may illuminate biases, not only in classical Christian culture but also in our secular world's inheritance from that culture.

The complex cultic theory of devil worship attributed to the witches seems to me to have been primarily a creation of the Inquisition that was subsequently accepted by Protestants as well. However, there were actual phenomena of village hex-practice in which the practitioner was primarily the old, often widowed, woman. From one angle the witch persecutions can be seen as an assault and suppression of this village religious subculture by the religious culture of the dominant classes.

ROSEMARY RUETHER, a Contributing Editor, is Associate Professor of Historical Theology at Howard University's School of Theology. She is editor of "Religion and Sexism: Images of Women in the Jewish and Christian Tradition" (Simon and Schuster, 1974).

Contrary to Margaret Murray, I don't regard this as an organized cult or "matriarchal religion." Rather, like voodoo and other, often magical, religiosity that subsist underneath official Christianity in areas like Haiti and Latin America today, it was a combination of beliefs and practices, containing many survivals of pre-Christian practices, by which the peasant population of Europe dealt with the vicissitudes of daily life.

In many folk cultures the practitioner of the lore surrounding childbirth, herbal medicine, and the incantations and practices of seeding, harvesting, and healing sick or melancholy people or animals tends to be the old woman. This is still true in Appalachia today, and it is also true in the Old Testament where the peddler of charms, potions and occult knowledge is female. It was from the Old Testament view of the witch that the medieval and Reformation Christians derived such dicta as "thou shall not suffer a sorceress to live" (Ex. 22: 18), which they translated into law.

There are various reasons why women have primordialially appeared in these roles. The mysteries with which the witch deals—birth and death, the chthonic realm, medicine, midwifery, even contraception—flow out of the woman's role as mother, cook, pharmacist, doctor, symbol of maternal and earth power. Also, one is tempted to see in the ex-

Progress Report #4

For a season of good tidings, hopeful news. As we come down to the wire (this is being written in early December, and we are just beginning to receive responses to our Thanksgiving letter), we have received almost \$29,000 in contributions. We want to thank the 600 of you whose gifts made possible this happy report.

To our other friends we want to say that the gift you send now will indeed make a difference and help insure our survival. With your help we can reach our goal of \$35,000 by December 31. *Don't forget* that your contribution is tax deductible.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

clusion of women from the official priesthoods—which sanction males' hunting, tribal and kingly roles in patriarchal culture—a pushing of women's charisms into the unsanctioned realm where they are seen as subversive and occult but to be resorted to when normal channels fail (e.g., Samuel and the witch of Endor in Samuel 28).

Finally biblical religion emphasized the demonic character of women by stigmatizing menstrual blood as "unclean." But this very concept of "uncleaness" is a reversal and suppression of what—in earlier cultures and still today in Indian and African religions—is seen as a powerful, sacral substance that must be surrounded with awesome taboos. In suppressing the divine power of femaleness, patriarchal religion also rendered this symbol of femaleness and its accompanying rituals negative, the source of the suppression and denigration of the female and her exclusion from male sanctuaries. It should not surprise us that in witch-lore a key substance of malignant magic is menstrual blood. Menstrual blood becomes, in patriarchy, a demonic material, like woman herself.

When Christianity conquered European peoples, it was at first content to destroy the cult of the ruling class and its priesthoods but to leave much of the

folk practices associated with daily life alone. Far from rejecting magic and belief in devils, Christianity tended to reinforce such beliefs by its magical view of its own sacramental powers and its relegation to the demonic of all gods and rites that fell outside the sway of its official priesthoods. Thus the magical practices and lore that continued in the peasant culture were set to be dogmatically regarded by the official church as "devil worship."

From "Wise Old Woman" to "Witch"

The woman, especially the old, widowed woman, continued to be the prime practitioner of this lore. This was partly because it provided such a woman with a profession by which she could offset her economic insecurity. The "wisdom" of the old woman was thus valued by the community. She operated as midwife and folk doctor, herbal pharmacist and purveyor of various hexes and charms to protect against distress, misfortune and malevolence.

The inquisitioners feature prominently the accusation that witches interfere in the "venerable act" by producing abortions or preventing conception. This reflects not only the inquisitioners' obsession with sex and their projection of it upon women, but



Christianity and Crisis

A Christian Journal of Opinion
537 West 121st Street / New York / New York 10027

JOHN C. BENNETT / Senior Contributing Editor

Contributing Editors:

FRANK BALDWIN
ROBERT McAFEE BROWN
JAMES H. CONE
HARVEY G. COX
JOHN R. FRY
ROBERT LEKACHMAN
JAMES R. MCGRAW
MARGARET MEAD
HOWARD MOODY
ARTHUR J. MOORE
MICHAEL NOVAK
ROSEMARY RUETHER
ROGER L. SHINN
WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW

Staff:

WAYNE H. COWAN / Editor
VIVIAN LINDERMAYER / Associate Editor
VIRGINIA SIXEAS, SND / Assistant Editor
A. ROBERT FREELEY, SRM / Business Mgr.
KENNETH SEHESTED / Student Intern

Contents:

VIEWPOINT:

THE MIDDLE EAST / Arthur J. Moore 290

THE PERSECUTION OF WITCHES:

A CASE OF SEXISM AND AGISM? / Rosemary Ruether 291

CONTINUING THE DISCUSSION:

JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE / Gregory Baum and Tracy Early 295

REVIEW:

CHRISTOLOGY AND POLITICS / Rosemary Ruether 298

Credits:

Cover and design by Mark Larson

Christianity and Crisis, Vol. 34, No. 22, December 23, 1974

Published biweekly for 24 consecutive issues, beginning the third Monday in September, by Christianity and Crisis, Inc., 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027. Subscription price: Canada and U.S., \$9.00; add \$1.00 for foreign postage; students \$7.00.

Copyright © 1974 Christianity and Crisis, Inc.

probably also the fact that such village witches knew folk methods of abortion and contraception that the dominant religion sought to suppress. This is true today among Indians remote from official Catholicism in Mexico.

Peasant culture did not condemn a witch for practicing magic, since everyone believed in and practiced magic. They condemned her only when they saw her as using her power to bring misfortune and evil down upon them, but they depended upon her to provide them with the vital lore of healing and protection. This was primordially a profession to be cultivated by the experienced older woman—the “wise old woman” of the village—especially when loss of land, husband or children left her bereft of other means of support. But such a person was also highly vulnerable. The nature of her profession located her at the connecting point of all the uncertainties and hostilities affecting village life. When things went wrong, she was often blamed and had few social resources with which to protect herself.

It was patriarchal religion—first in its biblical form and later, in a more extreme version, in ascetic Christianity—that transformed this primordial image of woman and her role as the “wise woman” into a demonic figure, the “witch” whose power comes from the worship of the devil. I have already alluded to the various ways in which patriarchal religion demonized female charisms and the rites and symbols of maternal power, strictly fortifying the “purity” of its own sanctuaries of male power against this demonic femaleness. By the fourth century Christianity had transformed itself into a new priestly, cultic religion and either carried on or readopted these negative views of the female from the Old Testament. Both woman's inferiority and her “uncleanness” were seen as strictly excluding her from the priesthood and its holy spaces.

But asceticism added another element to this traditional misogyny that deepened the subjugation of women into increasing paranoia. The relationship of sexual repression and the stereotyping of woman as the “enemy” is blatant to anyone who has read the *Malleus Maleficarum*, the text of the Inquisition's persecution of witches. Almost all the material in this text—both about the *maleficia* of witches and the process of witchfinding—is heavily laden with sexual paranoia and prurience. The Dominican authors of the manual dogmatically declare that witches are generically female (the very word for witch in the treatise is female) by linking woman's supposed inferiority both at Creation and more so in the Fall with her character as a sexual

being little capable of rational control. “Nothing is so insatiable as the mouth of the womb,” declare the authors.

But if woman was seen as witch—primarily-asexual temptress, one might have expected the primary victims to be young, beautiful girls and not ugly old hags. Indeed, young beautiful girls were often seen as beguiled into the role of accomplices of older witches, but the stereotype even in these manuals remains that of the old woman. This contradiction disappears, however, when one looks more closely at the matter.

Woman/Sexuality and Mortality

Patriarchy creates a gap between woman's actual experience of her sexual powers and her social image as sexually attractive. Traditionally, girls are kept sexually repressed until marriage. This conditioning still means that only gradually, after marriage, do women awake to a full recognition of their true capacity for sexual experience. Yet this virginal girl is exalted in the culture as the highest point of woman's sexual attractiveness to men. It is this gap between the approved use of the sexual image of the untried girl and the actual sexual potency of the older woman that seems to me to be at the root of the fact that the denunciation of woman as sexual beast reserves its most heinous strictures for the older woman.

The young girl operates sexually primarily as a tool of male culture. The sexually awakened older woman is sexually autonomous; she is not a sexual victim but a sexual initiator in her own right. In patriarchy a woman is supposed to appear “sexy” only when she is as yet inexperienced. But once she is sexually experienced, in marriage and motherhood, she is to cease to be interested in sex. Moreover, men today still preserve their marriageability much later than women, since they add to physical appearance their social and economic power. The 50-year-old man is still highly marriageable in our culture because of this social power. The woman, however, has only her body to trade upon. She is thereby “washed up” as a sexual being after her girlhood has faded in her late twenties (an earlier age in the harsher cultures of the past). But this is the age when she is just beginning to discover her actual sexual capacities and overcome her conditioning in sexual repression.

Thus, the fury and hatred of woman as sexual being is logically directed not against the young girl but against the idea of the older woman as a secret-

justice and God's will done on earth. The story of the Good Samaritan undermines the radical distinction between the sacred and the profane and keeps unsettling the self-understanding of the Christian community. Early reacts strongly against kinds of reflections that question Christian identity.

Early is unhappy that several Christians at the symposium assumed that after Auschwitz faith has become problematic and that we must pass beyond untroubled theism. After Auschwitz the affirmation of God as Lord of history has become difficult. When confronted with such an enormous crime, one performed through the collaboration of vast numbers in the midst of the Western world, we find that the very sensitivity that Christian faith has created in us makes it difficult to affirm God as the ruler of the world.

It is not lack of faith that leads to denial; it is precisely the new heart created by faith that refuses to believe in a divinity that supposedly permits such events. Early regards this as a questioning of one's Christian identity. Several theologians at the symposium thought that such an inability to believe, prompted by faith, generates a dialectic whose negative side is as important as the positive one. In fact, the repression of the negative side only too often leads Christians to a language about God and Jesus Christ that smacks of compulsive assurance and hides the christological truth that our openness to the divine is determined by our decision in regard to the human.

Moreover, Early is so used to Christian conversation about the State of Israel that he did not hear that at St. John the Divine it was the Jewish speakers who adopted diverse positions in regard to the meaning of Israel. What took place was a kind of discussion that is not usually carried on at polite Jewish-Christian assemblies.

For some Jewish thinkers Israel symbolized the survival of the Jewish people after extermination, and dedication to the survival of Israel was a religious duty. For others Israel was a symbol of Jewish survival that summoned Jews to pursue a universal humanism and take the side of the oppressed everywhere. For another Jewish thinker Israel was a sign of messianic fulfillment that must not be separated from other birth pangs of messiah in the present world, in particular the overcoming of the subjugation of women, the alienating character of labor, the exploitation of nature and the waging of wars. Another Jewish scholar understood Israel as the fruit of a Jewish liberation movement that should be in basic sympathy with the liberation movement of the Palestinians. Early's report creates the im-

pression that the Jewish participants avoided discussion of the critical issues in regard to Israel.

What is even more curious is that Early had the impression that the Christian contributions to the symposium were inspired by guilt feelings over Nazi anti-Semitism. As a matter of fact, the Christian lecturers were agreed that modern, racial anti-Semitism was a nonreligious phenomenon; at the same time they were fully aware that racial anti-Semitism of modern times had incorporated into its language the negation of Jewish existence inherited from the church's preaching. The Christian speakers at the symposium were not concerned with Nazi anti-Semitism. They were trying to discern in the present teaching of the churches the negation of Jewish existence and the multiple symbolization of the Jews as the unredeemed people; the blind, the stubborn, the nonpeople living in the prison of the law, "displeasing to God and hostile to all men, filling up the measure of their sins, for the wrath of God has come upon them to the utmost" (cf. 1 Thess. 2:16).

Facing Disturbing Questions

Early acknowledges this language of spiritual obliteration in the New Testament and Christian preaching. And what does he recommend? "Christians must learn to distinguish between 'the Jews' as *dramatis personae* of the biblical story and Jews as fellow human beings." Is this a realistic proposal? As a theologian one would suppose that biblical language has a strong effect on the Christian imagination and forms the profound attitudes of people. Christian history is proof that the distinction recommended by Early is not possible. It was precisely the confrontation with Auschwitz that led many Christian thinkers to the realization that what is revealed here is an ancient illness at the heart of Western civilization. It is there that they discovered the ideological deformation to which the gospel has been subjected. For Early such reflections question Christian identity and should, therefore, be omitted.

The Christian churches today are summoned to clarify their own view in regard to Jewish existence—and in regard to the world religions. Do Christians hold that Judaism is simply a step toward the full light of the gospel, that Jews who are faithful to their destiny should cease being Jews and become Christians? Or can the churches recognize theological space for Jewish religion? Can we honor Jews for what they are? Or only as potential Christians?

These are not idle questions, inspired by some

false sense of guilt; these are questions that culturally dominant religions must ask themselves in order to understand their effect on society. Early does not face up to these questions in his article. He uses humanistic language for the Jews as friends and neighbors; he wants Christians and Jews to stand against the secularists in society. But he does not wish to raise the issues from a theological point of view. This would be questioning Christian identity.

Early's discomfort is revealed in a curious paragraph where he compares the Christian attempts to convert Jews to Jesus Christ to the attempts on the part of contemporary Jews to convert their Christian partners in dialogue to become friends of Israel. As the Jews are offended by invitations to conversion, Early reasons, so are Christians.

I regard this as a very strange comparison. The writer compares the age-old evangelism addressed to the Jews, accompanied by a theology that negates their existence before God, with the desire of modern Jews to gain friends for the State of Israel, a country without oil or anything that makes it attractive to the world. The writer compares the conversion of Jews, which implies their disappearance as a people, to a change of attitude among Christians that does not risk their future existence. Finally, the writer compares the call to conversion in the name of religion to a call to changed attitudes in the name of justice.

The lack of rationality behind this comparison reveals the profound embarrassment of the writer. He does not wish to face the question of whether Christians are able to recognize a place for Jewish religion before God. He fears that by dealing with this question he will raise issues that could undermine Christian identity.

In Early's article Christian identity appears as the supreme value. Since he has adopted this concept from social psychology, he might well have used it in its most profound sense. For the identity that people define for themselves in their history has woven into it defenses and distortions. When these inauthentic elements in our self-definition are confronted, we often fear that our identity is being undermined, while in actual fact we are only being summoned to transcend the defenses and distortions to acquire a more authentic identity. When confronted by the truth those who want to save their lives will lose it, and those who are willing to lose it will find it. The confrontation with Auschwitz does raise disturbing questions regarding basic Christian language about salvation. The

Christian participants at the symposium on theology after the Holocaust tried to deal with these. □

GREGORY BAUM



TRACY EARLY REPLIES: Much of what Gregory Baum has written seems to be based on misinterpretation of what I was doing in my article. Or, as in the case of the assertion that distinguishing between Jews as figures in the biblical drama and contemporary Jews is impossible, he offers no alternative to consider. Has Baum gone through his Bible and torn out every page that could be quoted by anti-Semites and every page that might be misused in some other way? If so, it would be interesting to see what his Bible looks like now. How can he still use that Good Samaritan parable, when it so unfairly stigmatizes Jewish religious leadership?

That I listened to the lectures and discussions at St. John's out of my own "preoccupations" is doubtless true. My article did center on a few points that have particularly interested me, and it was not presented as a complete summary. Certainly I did not mean to convey an impression that "Jewish participants avoided discussion of the critical issues in regard to Israel." I might well have reported that Jewish participants did not express stereotyped views on Israel, but I had never supposed they would, so that was no problem for me.

In regard to that "curious" paragraph with the "lack of rationality" and "profound embarrassment," Baum is obviously correct in saying that Christian proselytism of Jews differs from Jewish attempts to win friends for Israel. My point, however, was not that they were equivalent in themselves but that both can become problems for dialogue if the two sides carry unstated expectations into their talks.

Moreover, in describing the problems I did not write, as Baum puts it, of Jewish attempts to win friends for Israel. I stated, on the contrary, that Jewish concern for Israel is "fully understandable," and if there is language to say that more clearly, I will be happy to use it. What the paragraph dealt with was an assumption Jews have sometimes made that Christian expressions of friendship necessarily mean siding with Israel exclusively in its conflicts with Arab groups. And I pointed out that some Christians seem to make the equation more em-

phatically than Jews. But other Christians, who appear to me sincere in their openness to Jewish-Christian friendship, analyze the Middle East conflict differently, and a failure to clarify assumptions here can create difficulties.

As for the matter of identity I am willing for Christians to engage in "kinds of reflection that question Christian identity" to whatever extent they may feel led. But I do not understand on what basis they would participate in Jewish-Christian dialogue if they could not still speak from a recognizably Christian perspective. Talks might be turned into Jewish-Gentile dialogue, or scholars could gather for general discussion of problems in Western civilization. But my article was concerned with Jewish-Christian dialogue.

I do not know what response I could make to assertions that out of fear I refuse to deal with critical questions, etc. But assuming this is true and also assuming that Baum has fearlessly engaged in the reflections, discovered the "ideological deformation," transcended the defenses, gone through the dialectics of negative and positive, overcome my allegedly "radical" distinction between the sacred and the profane, taken social psychology concepts in their "most profound sense," acquired some "more authentic identity" and no doubt done many other rare and marvelous things, "as a theologian," what is the result of all this? Do Christians have anything positive to contribute to Jewish-Christian dialogue, or must their participation be limited to talking about the negative things they deplore in the past and present teaching of the churches? Baum is incorrect in saying religious anti-Semitism is not an issue for me. But I do not think it is the only subject for Jewish-Christian dialogue.

I do not believe my article provided any basis for concluding that I am "unhappy that several Christians at the symposium avowed that after Auschwitz faith has become problematic and that we must pass beyond untroubled theism." Rather, I set forth the question of faith in "God after Auschwitz" as one of those questions Jews and Christians might profitably consider together. Actually I think faith has always been "problematic"—for Christians radically so ever since the Crucifixion—and I am not aware that there has been such a thing as "untroubled theism" since the Serpent first asked, "Hath God said?" But I do not suppose that Jews at a symposium on Auschwitz would need to be told that there are problems. Does Christian theology have no more to say than this?

While I have an impression it might be useful for some Christian participants in Jewish-Christian dialogue to show a little stronger sense of Christian identity, I wonder if Baum might be going too far the other way in wanting Christians to decide

questions of Jewish identity. When he comes to talk of Judaism, somehow the fog lifts and all ambiguity departs. Suddenly free of all identity hang-ups, he asks, "Can we honor Jews for who they are." Apparently it is no problem to know who they are. And some "we" group has been found with which to identify. But how can Baum be sure this "we" group is equipped to go around passing out honor?

Baum even reproaches me for not facing up to the issue of Christians recognizing "a place for Jewish religion before God." I am a little apprehensive about the weakening of Judaism and Christianity by secular forces, since it appears that when people lose faith in the God of Israel they do not just go into neutral but revert to serving the gods of the nations. But I do not know that Christians have been authorized to make decisions about what has a place before God, or that Jews need to wait on Christians to make a decision, one way or the other, about what they should do to be "faithful to their destiny." Anyway, if the words of Israel's prophets may be accepted, God has certain negative feelings on religious things. So when it comes to the place of religion—Jewish, Christian or other—before God, I would like to leave a little more room for ambiguity.

Finally, as for guilt, Jewish participants at the symposium felt moved to warn against it, and people not present sensed it through newspaper reports, so it was not just "my own curious" impression. □

review/ **christology and politics**

ONE OF THE EFFECTS of the New Left may be the revival of Christian socialism as a religious and political option. Christian socialists were still respectable in the 1930's, but the Cold War put the discussion of socialism in the freezer. When Tom Hayden helped write the SDS Port Huron Statement in 1962, it was still unmentionable even in those circles.

The turn to Marxism in the later sixties revealed the immaturity left by the lack of a developed socialist tradition in the United States. Rags and tags of old slogans were picked up to cover the paucity of knowledge. The end of the sixties saw the self-destruction of most of the youth left, but from its ashes may now be emerging a new group of mature intellectuals who have decided that American corporate capitalism is not a viable means of human development and have moved to a sustained commitment to socialism.

Some of these new socialists are seeking an integral relationship between Christianity and socialism. Such a person is William Coats, author of *God in Public* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1974) and an Episcopal chaplain at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. The subtitle of the book, "Political Theology beyond Niebuhr," signals an abandonment of Niebuhr's belief that the American system represented the best approximation of "Christian realism" in the political order.

Borrowing some of his analysis from Herbert Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man*, Coats attacks the fundamental character of "bourgeois" civilization as one which has lost the dimension of the transcendent in history and reifies its own accomplishments in an idolatry of consumerism and technological prowess. According to Coats, the immanentist messianism of technological society found its denouement in Viet Nam. Christians must read the debacle of American power in Viet Nam as divine judgment upon the very character of its civilization and its self-absolutization internationally.

However, one wonders at the historical myopia that credits Christianity with a vision of future historical hope and condemns something called "bourgeois society" for having lost it. The recovering of historical hope would seem to have been more the characteristic of those liberal societies that brought Christian otherworldliness back to earth. Marxism is very much the child of the Enlightenment in this respect. Like many Christians who jump on the bandwagon of the left against the "middle class," waving the flag of the Risen Christ, Coats disowns his own historical antecedents. It was Christianity that cut off eschatology from future historical expectations. It was bourgeois society that reconnected the transcendent and history and made critical political theology possible.

Coats' second foe is American pietism. He sees the failure of the New Left in its inability to go beyond the stance of existentialist disaffiliation and build the theory and practice of historical change. Part of the defect lies in the social class of the dissenters. As children of the affluent society most of them stopped short at the point where their alienation pointed toward a committed struggle to overthrow the basis of their own security. It was easier to move toward forms of experiential negation and the quest for the purified self than to build the practical basis of a movement that threatened one's own unjust affluence. It was more fun to ventilate one's scorn in the warm baths of Esalen for \$500 a weekend.

Even those who sounded most political, most willing to take concrete risks with their "bodies," were addicted to this preference for personalist dramas of self-exculpation rather than practical political work. The result was a rapid fading of the New Left, to be replaced by a plethora of salvation cults. Rennie Davis, the dramatist of the apocalyptic self in the streets of Washington, is not illogically succeeded by Rennie Davis, infatuated with the improbable boy-messiah's apotheosis in

the Houston Astrodome.

To the false options of American imperialist Constantinianism and New Left escapist transcendentalism, Coats offers the socialist project. Socialism means serious commitment to the hard work of dismantling an empire built for a ruling class elite—enthroned upon the work and resources of others—and replacing it with a society of economic equity whose first principle is the maximum development of persons rather than profits.

Neither Communist State Socialism nor the Welfare State is a model for the socialist ideal. Socialism must be founded upon democracy. Socialist hope means "democratic participation in and social ownership of the means of production, the values of mutuality and intimacy, human relations that minimize greed and ambition, the end to class privilege." Niebuhr's gap between moral man (private man) and immoral society (corporate relations) is rejected. Socialism demands the organization of the corporate structure of human life to maximize relations of love and mutuality, not merely the balancing of egos.

Integrating Theology and Politics

Despite Robert McAfee Brown's assurance on the book's back cover that Coats has successfully integrated theology and political criticism, it is precisely at this point that the book falls apart for me. Coats attempts to juxtapose the radically christological dualist theology of the German school with a socialist agenda, and the two just never quite come together.

It is unfortunate that Coats shows little acquaintance with the more developed nuances of Christian-Marxist dialogue and completely ignores the Marxist theology of liberation. The gap between the Christian transcendent beyond history and the Marxist transcendence through history is extensively discussed there. Coats, instead, proclaims a risen Lord beyond history, unconnected with historical process itself, as the banner of historical advance and makes little effort to find a bridge between the two.

Christian-Marxist dialogue also suggests the par-

Book Publishing

Manuscripts invited for prompt editorial review and terms of publication. All categories invited including scholarly works. Professional editing, design and production plus expert promotion and distribution since 1920. Send manuscript or inquiry, or call (215) 563-3553. Ask for Inquire's Guide B-61.

DORRANCE & COMPANY
1617 J.F.K. Blvd., Phila., Pa. 19103



Homosexuality

THE TEXTILE WORKERS
VS. J.P. STEVENS

KEN WITHERS
1024 BENNINGTON ST
E BOSTON MA

0279

021859

02138

and the Church

James B. Nelson

Paul H. Sherry and
Robert T. Strommen

Keeping Secrets from Ourselves

Arthur J. Moore

energy policy

DATA TO THE PEOPLE
leon howell

Keeping Secrets from Ourselves

THE SOAP OPERA adventures of the wicked Central Intelligence Agency seem destined to have a longer run than such television staples as *Love of Life*. Indeed, most of the titillating elements of solid box office scandal are there: secrecy, money and power. The only thing missing is sex. No wonder the press cannot bear to let the subject drop, knowing a good thing when it has hold of one.

Such fascinating tidbits as the recent revelations about long-time secret payments to Jordan's King Hussein and many others were clearly not part of any scenario planned by the Carter Administration, which had hoped to close down the CIA Follies as part of the old days now departed. Unfortunately, the Administration's reaction, as much as the revelations themselves, has given the subject a renewed lease on life.

There are two moral questions involved here, and President Carter did not do too well on either one. The first question is, how much secrecy in a democracy? More specifically, in our great, confused, suspicious republic of the moment.

On this issue, one cannot lay down absolutes. Heywood Broun said of censorship that anyone who claims to oppose all censorship can always be shown some item that he/she thinks should not be printed. (And that was long before some of our more squeamish intellectuals decided that *Hustler* was that item.) So it is with openness and secrecy in government. Even among people least trustful of power, most probably would agree that government must have *some* secrets. Nonetheless, the operating rule should be that the number be kept as low as possible.

All governments think that what they do is of great importance and delicacy. The frequent corollary to this is that it should be kept secret. Usually, this is nothing but vanity. The number of real, necessary secrets is probably remarkably small. Revelations like the current ones are annoying to those concerned and make their work a bit more difficult; but that is all.

It was undoubtedly the good administrator in President Carter, the naval officer who likes to run a "tight" as well as a "happy" ship, who began the all-too-familiar bureaucratic muttering about too-easy access to secrets being the problem. He should think

again. In a democracy the people's right to know comes ahead of administrative efficiency. Generally, he has kept that principle in sight, but this is not the area in which to let it slip.

The second question is the morality and wisdom of payments to foreign heads of governments. President Carter, while declining to comment on specific cases, has stated that he found nothing illegal or improper in these reported payments. (Some reports, he said, were inaccurate; others substantially true.) The question of legality we leave to the lawyers. Impropriety is more of a problem.

Let us concede for the sake of argument that these payments were not for personal gain of a frivolous nature and did not end up in the form of either sports cars or Swiss bank accounts. (That may be conceding rather too much, if we remember Harry Truman's complaints about the money that went to Chiang Kai-shek, but the moral question does not revolve around how well the money was spent.)

In essence, the defense for payments is that the money is spent for such purposes as intelligence, political support or maintaining good will, that this is a fairly straightforward and inexpensive way of securing these objectives, and that this is the manner in which intelligence services have always operated. Of these three justifications, the last is none at all since it is used to cover all customs irrespective of merit. The middle one has relative merit—money is cleaner than murder or blackmail, and sending the money right to the top is more efficient than indiscriminate bribery. Ultimately, however, the question is whether intelligence gathering or political good will is worth the falsity introduced into relations among nations by secret payoffs.

How can a citizen of Jordan, for example, ever be sure whether his/her nation's policies are those of his/her government's best judgment or whether they are corrupted by the pressure of US money? How can a citizen of the US ever know whether our diplomacy succeeds on its merits and therefore may prove lasting or whether we simply have bought a possibly false solution?

To raise these questions is not to counsel perfection in foreign affairs. In a world where nations vary so widely in both power and wealth, the relationships between the rich and the poor, the large and the small, the weak and the strong, are never entirely equal or free of these questions. But do we really want a world composed of superpowers and "client" states? Even if this is partially a reality, let us keep our categories straight and not subsidize governments, parties and individuals under the table. To do that is to mislead ourselves, and that is certainly "improper."

ARTHUR J. MOORE

Christianity and Crisis

A Boycott in behalf of Workers' Rights

THE TEXTILE WORKERS VS. J.P. STEVENS

Paul H. Sherry and Robert T. Strommen

"At J.P. Stevens, before we started organizing, it wasn't much different than slavery."

ADDIE JACKSON
Statesboro, Ga.

"After 37 years of loyal and faithful service, I have a plaque, \$1,360 and brown lung."

THOMAS MALONE
Retired Stevens worker

"I was always a good worker. But when I joined the union, all of a sudden I wasn't a good worker anymore."

MAURINE HEDGEPAH
Roanoke Rapids, N.C.

"Since the election the company's been spreading rumors that they're going to sell out the plants here or close them down."

DANNY BLACKWELL
Stevens employee

ON MARCH 1, 1977, 3,000 representatives of church, civil rights and union organizations demonstrated in front of the J.P. Stevens Tower in New York City. Chants of "Boycott Stevens" filled the air. Inside, at the annual stockholders' meeting of J.P. Stevens and Co., Inc., Coretta Scott King spoke in support of resolutions presented to management by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries (World Division), the Maryknoll Fathers and three other Catholic bodies. The resolutions called for public disclosure of company policy and practice regarding equal employment opportunity and labor policy.

Nearby, Timothy Smith, director of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, chaired a press conference at which Charles Morgan Jr. of Southerners for Economic Justice and Paul O'Dwyer, President of the New York City Council, among others, spoke in favor of the stockholders' resolutions. Also announced was support for a worldwide boycott of Stevens' products by the United Church Board for

PAUL H. SHERRY and ROBERT T. STROMMEN have been involved as observers and participants in issues of justice concerning American workers for many years. They are executives with the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, which recently voted to support the boycott of J.P. Stevens products.

Homeland Ministries, the Ad Hoc Group of 14 Southern Ministers and the Missouri Council of Churches.

For Addie Jackson, a former employee of Stevens' now-closed Statesboro, Ga. plant and an early leader in the struggle to organize Stevens' workers, March 1 was a day to remember. The national support she had sought for so many years finally was gathering momentum. Eventual victory no longer seemed an improbable dream but a real, though still distant, possibility.

As important as March 1 was, however, it was but one more significant event in the 14-year struggle of textile workers to organize J.P. Stevens' 80 plants throughout the South. It was also the latest in a more recent chain of events that began in August 1974 when a majority of workers in the seven plants in Roanoke Rapids, N.C., voted to be represented by the Textile Workers Union of America (TWUA). The vote was close—1,685 to 1,488—and it was the first clear-cut win since the beginning of the 1963 organizing drive. Labor leaders declared it a decisive step toward the organization of the entire South's textile industry.

But there has been little further forward movement since then. Negotiations between the TWUA and J.P. Stevens have been deadlocked. The union contends that the company is not negotiating in good faith, and the Regional Director of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has filed a complaint to that effect. A fundamental issue in the negotiations is voluntary dues check-off. It is standard practice in unionized industries for the company to withhold union dues from union members. Stevens appears unwilling to do this; the union feels it cannot survive without it.

A second point of contention is a binding arbitration agreement to deal with grievances, a feature long included in the vast majority of industrial union contracts. This would mean that a third party would have the power to rule on worker grievances that could not be settled otherwise. Without this feature, the union believes, there is a chaotic work environment, and a strike becomes the only method of solving unsettled disputes. Further, the union regards binding arbitration as essential if workers are to have any rights

in relation to the company. Stevens, on the other hand, sees binding arbitration as an illegitimate intrusion into the rights and responsibilities of management. Other issues are also in dispute.

Why Is a Boycott Necessary?

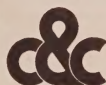
In June 1976, the TWUA merged with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America to form the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). The new union announced a worldwide consumer boycott of J.P. Stevens' products. It hopes to use the boycott not only to force the company to negotiate in good faith at Roanoke Rapids but also to allow free elections followed by good faith negotiating in all Stevens' plants. In addition to the boycott, litigation through the courts is continuing. The union has decided not to use the strike as one of its weapons because it is convinced that Stevens would simply close the affected plants—as it did several years earlier in Statesboro—and shift the work to one or more of its many others.

J.P. Stevens' policy through the years has been to avoid public discussion of the issues raised by the union. However, in response to the boycott announcement the company released a statement

which argued that the boycott will jeopardize the jobs of thousands of workers. In a letter to all employees James D. Finley, Chairman of the Board, wrote: "Whenever these merged unions come around in the future and try to persuade you as Stevens' employees that they are working for you and your welfare, you should always remember that through this nationwide boycott they are deliberately, ruthlessly and without mercy trying to destroy your jobs and your livelihood." The union, of course, denies this charge and compares its position to that espoused by Martin Luther King at the height of the Montgomery Bus Protest in 1956: "Our struggle is not towards putting the bus company out of business, but towards putting justice in business."

The company continues to contend that its employees do not want to be organized and points to the fact that after long years of efforts by the TWUA, and after 14 separate elections under the supervision of the NLRB, the union has won but one election. Further, the employees who did vote to be represented by the union constitute only about seven percent of the company-wide work force of 44,000 persons. Stevens concludes that the overwhelming majority of their employees do not want to be unionized.

The union responds by stating that 93 percent of the



Christianity and Crisis

A Christian Journal of Opinion
537 West 121st Street / New York / New York 10027

JOHN C. BENNETT / Senior Contributing Editor

Contributing Editors:

FRANK BALDWIN
ROBERT McAFEE BROWN
JAMES H. CONE
HARVEY G. COX
JOHN R. FRY
ROBERT LEKACHMAN
JAMES R. MCGRAW
MARGARET MEAD
HOWARD MOODY
ARTHUR J. MOORE
ROSEMARY RUETHER
ROGER L. SHINN
WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW

Staff:

WAYNE H. COWAN / Editor
VIVIAN LINDERMAYER / Associate Editor
MARILYN SEVEN / Editorial Assistant

Contents:

page

KEEPING SECRETS FROM OURSELVES/ Arthur J. Moore	58
THE TEXTILE WORKERS VS. J.P. STEVENS/ Paul H. Sherry and Robert T. Strommen	59
HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE CHURCH/ James B. Nelson	63
ENERGY POLICY: DATA TO THE PEOPLE/ Leon Howell	69

Credits:

cover and design by Cathy Neukum
Christianity and Crisis, Vol. 37, No. 5, April 4, 1977

Published biweekly, except monthly in July, August and January, by Christianity and Crisis, Inc. 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
Subscription price: Canada and U.S. \$10.00; add \$1.00 for foreign postage; students \$8.00
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional mailing offices.

Copyright © 1977 Christianity and Crisis, Inc.

ISSN 0009-5745

workers have never had a chance to vote in an atmosphere free of intimidation, and that in the election at Roanoke Rapids, where the union was given access to the plants for the first time, the workers voted for the union. Also, a number of the lost elections have been overturned in the courts, and others are still in litigation.

Currently, there is an organization of anti-union workers in Roanoke Rapids, the so-called "J.P. Stevens Employee Education Committee." This group is gathering names of workers who do not want to be represented by the ACTWU. Its lawyer, Robert Valois, is a member of a Raleigh firm well known regionally as a management representative. For this and other reasons the union suspects that the committee was formed at Stevens' urging, though the company denies any involvement.

Some people have asked why a boycott is necessary. Why don't the workers make use of the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to protect their interests? The answer is that the workers have used and continue to use the NLRA, but in and of itself it is insufficient. In fact, the Stevens controversy makes clear the law's ineffectiveness in dealing with a powerful corporate design intended to frustrate its purpose. The national policy to provide workers with the right of collective bargaining was authorized because of the injustice of pitting unorganized individuals against the institutionalized power of corporate employers. The NLRA is designed to provide a means to determine whether the workers in a given company wish to exercise their right to collective bargaining.

However, the NLRB has not been able to ensure that the parties involved in a labor dispute follow the rules. The only remedy is a costly and time-consuming process that works to the disadvantage of low-skilled and poorly paid mill hands. A company that is willing to disobey the rules of fair play has little to fear except an extended lawsuit and minor costs for back pay and damages if it loses, costs that it can charge to business expenses. Workers, of course, do not have these resources. The weakness of the NLRA, and the willingness of J.P. Stevens to exploit its weakness, has led the ACTWU to conclude that a boycott is necessary.

The boycott will succeed, however, only if it is able to generate broad support, not only within the labor community but also in religious and civil rights organizations. The significance of March 1, 1977 is that it indicates this support is building. And as an increasing number of persons and organizations become aware of the issues at hand, it will accelerate. Support is warranted because the root issues are those that enhance human dignity—the right to work at a decent wage and under decent working conditions; the

right to join a union without fear of harassment; and the right to equal employment opportunity without regard for race or sex. In each instance Stevens' record is unsatisfactory.

A Look at Stevens' Record

J.P. Stevens is the second largest textile manufacturer in the United States. (Burlington is the largest.) In 1976 it had sales of \$1.4 billion and a net income of more than \$40 million. Numerous people have contended for a number of years that it is one of the most irresponsible of America's corporations. For example, Boyd Leedom, Chairman of the National Labor Relations Board during the Eisenhower Presidency, once described Stevens as "so out of touch with a humane, civilized approach to industrial relations that it should shock even those least sensitive to honor, justice and decent treatment." In July 1976 the NLRB's Regional Director, summing up 13 years of board cases, said: "Since on or about June 1963, and at all times thereafter, [J.P. Stevens] has engaged in a massive, multistate campaign to deny its employees their rights under the Act to seek collective bargaining representatives of their own choosing [and in addition] has committed unfair labor practices of unprecedented flagrancy and magnitude"

Products to Boycott

One obstacle to an effective boycott of J.P. Stevens' products is that there are so many of them. A giant corporation, Stevens and its associated firms sell dozens of products under dozens of names—everything from telephone directories through aircraft to carpets, sheets, hosiery and draperies. But the same problem has been confronted in previous such actions.

Following is a list of some Stevens' brand names likely to be encountered at the retail level:

Fabrics: Stevens Fabrics; Hockanum, Boldeena, Wash Ease, Wool Press, Worumbo, Forstmann and Andover woollens and worsteds; Appleton flannels and corduroys; Twist Twill, Academy and Lady Twist Twill cotton work fabrics; Weltmatic, 20 Below, Gesture, Coachman, Lady Consort, Carousel, Stevetex, Windsheer and Whisper Knit Synthetics and blends.

Sheets, blankets, toweling, table cloths: Utica, Fine Arts, Beauti-Blend, Mohawk, Utica/-Mohawk, Beauciale, Tastemaker, Simtex.

Carpets: Gulistan, Tastemaker, Contender and Merryweather.

Women's hosiery: Fruit of the Loom, Hip-lets, Finesse and Big Mama.

Miscellaneous: J.P. Stevens draperies; Always in Step women's slippers; Kyron interfacing for apparel.

Item: Workers who attempt to band together are fired, harassed, written up and intimidated by supervisors. In 1963 Al Sanders, who had worked at the Dunean mill for 15 years, signed a union card. Soon thereafter he was told his work "was insufficient," and he was fired. Jess and Donald Cudd, father and son, joined the union in Whitmore, S.C. Donald joined in the summer of 1963 and was fired that October. His father was urged by his boss to encourage his son to leave town. The boss also urged Jess to adopt Donald's children and go on welfare. Jess refused and later was fired. Maurine Hedgepath testified before the NLRB in 1964, after which she went on a maternity leave. When she returned to work in January 1965, she was told she no longer had a job. Her husband was soon discharged from employment after 25 years as a loom fixer. Four years of legal action were required to have Mrs. Hedgepath reinstated with back pay.

These are simply representative examples. In all, the NLRB has found J.P. Stevens guilty of violating the NLRA 15 times, involving numerous workers—more times than any other company in American history. Company appeals were rejected eight times by Federal appeals courts and three times by the US Supreme Court.

Item: When workers have banded together successfully, Stevens has either closed the plant involved or bargained in bad faith. In Statesboro the company's response to an organizing drive and certification election was so flagrantly illegal that in 1969 the NLRB certified the Textile Workers Union as the bargaining agent. In 1971 the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Stevens was required to bargain with the union. The company did sit down but still refused to bargain in good faith. The NLRB entered the courts again to seek a contempt citation forcing the company to bargain in good faith. Finally, in 1975—shortly before the 5th Circuit Court's preliminary report found the company guilty of bargaining in bad faith and recommended a court order requiring genuine bargaining—Stevens closed the plant. And in spite of NLRB charges it has remained closed.

Item: Workers who favor organizing are subject to out-of-plant surveillance. In Wallace, S.C., union organizers discovered that their phones were being tapped and traced the taps to J.P. Stevens' officials. The Textile Workers and the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department filed a civil suit against Stevens for damages stemming from the wire-tapping. In 1973 the company paid the union \$50,000 to settle the suit. A jury's verdict convicting two Stevens' officials was overturned by the trial judge on a legal technicality.

This February Father John Barry, an ACTWU organizer in Hamlet, N.C., reported that he had been

under surveillance as he visited workers from nine area Stevens' plants. Father Barry stated, "They come up with surprising information. I don't know how they got it—maybe their guardian angels tell them. I haven't seen any cars tailing me, but my license plate number and background as a priest were written up in the local Chamber of Commerce newsletter."

Item: Wages of workers in J.P. Stevens' plants are significantly below national averages. In mid-1975 their hourly wage was \$3.20 compared to \$4.62 for factory workers throughout the US. Even though Stevens' officers can expect to retire at age 65 with pensions as high as \$75,000 per year, workers' pensions are limited to \$2 per month for each year of past service (up to 10 years) plus \$4 per month for each year starting in 1976. Thus, a worker retiring in 1976 with 30 years' service would receive only \$20 per month pension.

A Just Social Cause

More generally, in North Carolina, where Stevens plants are concentrated, the average hourly manufacturing wage is the lowest in the nation. North Carolina is also the least unionized state. A June 1975 report by a group of researchers at the University of North Carolina (UNC) strongly suggests that the low level of unionization is a major reason for this earnings gap. (See "Earnings Gap in North Carolina" by Emil Malizia et al., which can be ordered by writing Mr. Malizia at UNC, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514.)

Item: Women and blacks suffer from discrimination in employment practices. Statistically, blacks are 22 percent of the company work force but hold only 3 percent of the white collar jobs. Only 3 percent of "blue-collar" white women at Stevens—as against 31 percent of white "blue-collar" men—are in skilled craft jobs. In December 1975 US District Court Judge F.T. Dupree Jr. of Charlotte, N.C. ruled that the company management in Roanoke Rapids had engaged at various times since 1969 in a series of discriminatory employment practices including hiring on the basis of race, discrimination against blacks in layoffs and recalls, discrimination against black males in job assignments, and reserving clerical jobs for white employees exclusively. At present Stevens is the subject of a broad "pattern and practice" investigation by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Item: A number of J.P. Stevens' plants have been cited as environmentally unsafe for workers. The 1970 Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) is supposed to protect workers from hazards such as brown lung—a respiratory disease caused by breathing cotton dust. The maximum exposure level allowed

under the OSHA for cotton dust in a textile mill is one milligram per cubic meter of air, a standard branded as much too high by the Textile Workers. Yet, despite the Stevens claims to have spent over \$4.2 million complying with the OSHA in 1974, cotton dust levels at Stevens' plants have been recorded at as high as 2.96 milligrams per cubic meter of air—almost three times higher than the allowed maximum. In addition inspectors have recorded noise levels in Stevens' plants as high as 110 decibels, while many other employers are trying to reduce noise levels to below 85 decibels.

James D. Finley, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of J.P. Stevens, has stated, "The forcing of unions on working people cannot be made into a proper social cause." If that were the issue, Mr. Finley

would be right. But it is not. Rather, the issue is the unwillingness of J.P. Stevens to provide a climate in which working people are treated decently and are free to choose whom they want to represent their interests.

This issue *can* be made into a social cause, as has been demonstrated by the Cesar Chavez-led boycott against California lettuce and grape growers and by the boycott against the products of the Farah Co. on behalf of Mexican American workers. Further, a significant segment of the American people will support a just cause—and the boycott against J.P. Stevens is a just cause. Addie Jackson and Thomas Malone and Maurine Hedgepath and Danny Blackwell and thousands like them ultimately will prevail. □

Toward a Sexual Ethics of Love

Homosexuality and the Church

James B. Nelson

The current controversy within the church over the ordination of avowed homosexuals has underlined the need for us all to grapple with the implications of homosexuality and homosexual life style—not only for the ministry in particular but for the church's self-understanding in general. Questions such as whether and in what sense one's sexual orientation should be a criterion for ordination, the differing theological and biblical perspectives on homosexual acts and what challenges homosexuality may pose to the social and psychological aspects of the dominant heterosexual identity and values all need to be faced squarely if this issue is to receive the full and open discussion it so urgently requires.

The following article by James B. Nelson, professor of Christian Ethics at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, is a thoughtful overview of several of these questions. Professor Nelson is currently on sabbatical leave at Oxford where he is working on a book in this area. (This article appeared originally in the Winter, 1975 issue of Theological Markings, the journal of the United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.) Aspects of his discussion will be developed further in our special number on Homosexuality and Ordination, which will be published later this spring.

homosexuality more openly, honestly and sensitively than it has yet done. Beyond this legitimate and appropriate pressure, however, there are other compelling reasons for the church to reexamine its theology and practice:

(1) Homosexual Christians are sisters and brothers of all other Christians, earnestly seeking the church's full acceptance without prejudgment on the basis of a sexual orientation regarding which they had no basic choice.

(2) While antihomosexual bias has existed in Western culture generally, the church must take responsibility for its share in shaping, supporting and transmitting negative attitudes toward homosexuality.

(3) The Christian mandate for social justice will not let us forget that discrimination continues today against millions of gay persons in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and in the enjoyment of fundamental civil liberties.

(4) The church is called to do its ongoing theological and ethical work as responsibly as possible. Fresh insights from feminist theologians, gay Christians and those secular scholars who frequently manifest God's "common grace" in the world remind us of the numerous ways in which our particular sexual conditionings color our perceptions of God's nature and presence among us. If the Protestant Principle

THE GAY CAUCUSES now active in virtually every major American denomination no longer will let us forget that the church must face the issue of

warns us against absolutizing historically relative theological judgments, so also our openness to continuing revelation should convince us, with some of our ancestors-in-faith, that "the Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth."

(5) The heterosexually oriented majority in the church has much to gain from a deeper grappling with this issue: an enriched capacity to love other human beings more fully and with less fear.

The Bible and Homosexuality

A brief survey of pertinent scriptural passages must begin with a word about our interpretive principles. My first hermeneutical assumption—and the most fundamental one—is that Jesus Christ is the bearer of God's invitation to human wholeness and is the focal point of God's humanizing action; hence, Jesus Christ is the central norm through which and by which all else must be judged. Second, I believe that the interpreter must take seriously both the historical context of the biblical writer and the present cultural situation. Third, we should study the Bible, aware of the cultural relativity through which we perceive and experience Christian existence. And, fourth, our scriptural interpretation should exhibit openness to God's truth that may be revealed through other disciplines of human inquiry.

With these assumptions in mind let us turn to the Bible, noting first that nowhere does it say anything about homosexuality as a *sexual orientation*. Its references are to certain kinds of homosexual *acts*. Understanding homosexuality as a psychic orientation is relatively recent. It is crucial that we remember this, for in all probability the biblical writers in each instance were speaking of homosexual acts undertaken by those persons whom the authors presumed to be heterosexually constituted.

While the Onan story (Gen. 38:1-11) does not deal directly with homosexual activity, it gives us important clues to some of the reasons for its ancient condemnation. Onan's refusal to impregnate his widowed sister-in-law, a refusal expressed in his deliberate withdrawal before ejaculation, was interpreted by the biblical writer as so serious a violation of divine decree that Onan was killed by Yahweh.

Three interpretive observations are important to our subject. First, the story clearly represents the strong procreative emphasis characteristic of the Hebrew interpretation of sexuality. Our awareness that the very survival of a relatively small tribe struggling against external challenges depended significantly upon abundant procreation helps us to understand this emphasis. Yet, our own situation on an overcrowded planet is markedly different, and faithful response to God's humanizing activity in Christ should compel us to reassess this procreative norm.

Second, the story is based in part upon a biological misunderstanding present throughout the Bible. The prescientific mind, and more particularly the prescientific male mind, believed that the man's semen contained the whole of nascent life. With no knowledge of eggs and ovulation, it was assumed that

the woman provided only the incubating space, "ground for the seed." Hence, the deliberate and nonprocreative spilling of semen was equivalent to the deliberate destruction of human life. When such occurred in male masturbation, in male homosexual acts or in *coitus interruptus*, the deserved judgment was as severe as that for abortion or for murder. The third observation follows from this. Male masturbatory and homosexual acts have been condemned far more vigorously in the Judeo-Christian tradition than have similar female acts. The sexism endemic to a patriarchal society ironically bore with its logic a heavier burden upon "deviants" of the "superior" gender.

It is, however, another Genesis account (19:1-29) that we associate more directly with homosexual activity—the Sodom story. Contemporary biblical studies persuasively indicate that the major theme of the story and concern of the writer were not homosexual activity as such but rather the breach of ancient Hebrew hospitality norms and persistent violations of rudimentary social justice. That inhospitality and injustice are "the sin of Sodom" is evident when one examines parallel scriptural accounts as well as explicit references to Sodom elsewhere in the Old Testament. Further, the story is not given an explicitly and dominantly sexual interpretation until several centuries after it was written—in the intertestamental Book of Jubilees.

Given this general agreement, scholars do differ as to whether homosexual activity actually played any role in the story at all. However, within the context of the story's major theme, what if we assume that the writer did intend to condemn certain homosexual acts as particularly illustrative of human guilt in the face of God's righteousness? Even then, in fairness to the text, it is difficult to construe the Sodom account as a judgment against all homosexual activity, for its condemnation then would be directed against homosexual rape. Indeed, as John McNeill has observed, the use of the Sodom story in the Christian West may be another of those ironies of history. In the name of a biblical account whose major theme is inhospitality and injustice, countless homosexually oriented persons have been subjected to precisely that.

What are we to make of those Old Testament passages that in addition to rape condemn other homosexual acts? (See, for example, the Holiness Code in Lev. 18:22 and 20:13; also Deut. 23:17 and I Kings 14:24, 15:12 and 22:46.) Cultic defilement is the context of these passages. Canaanite fertility worship, involving sacrificial prostitution and orgies, constituted a direct threat to Yahweh's exclusive claim. Yahweh was the God who worked through the freedom of human history and not, primarily, through the cycles of biological life. Thus, sexuality was to be seen not as a mysterious sacred power, but rather as part of human life to be used responsibly in gratitude to its creator. In this context these texts are most adequately interpreted, and this central message is utterly appropriate to the norm of the new humanity that we meet in Jesus Christ.

Also, remember that a common Middle East practice during this period was to submit captured male foes to anal rape. Such was an expression of domination and scorn. As long as homosexual activity was generally understood to express such hatred and

contempt—particularly in societies where the dignity of the male was held to be of great importance—any such activity was to be rejected summarily.

In the New Testament we have no record of Jesus saying anything about homosexuality, either as a sexual orientation or as a practice. The major New Testament references are found in two Pauline letters and in I Timothy. The context of Paul's widely quoted statement in Romans 1:26-27 is clearly his concern about idolatry. Three things should be noted. First, concerned about the influence of paganism upon the Roman Christians, Paul sees homosexual expression as a result of idolatry, but he does not claim that such practices are the *cause* of God's wrath. Second, in this passage we have a description of homosexual *lust* ("consumed with passion for one another") but not an account of interpersonal homosexual love.

Third, Paul's wording makes it plain that he understands homosexual activity as that indulged in by heterosexuals, hence that which is contrary to their own sexual orientation. Thus, it is difficult to construe Paul's statements as applicable to acts of committed love engaged in by persons for whom same-sex orientation is part of the givenness of their "nature." Indeed, Paul uses "nature" as a flexible concept expressing varying concerns in different contexts. An ethical position that condemns homosexuality as a violation of natural law must turn to a nonbiblical philosophical position—but not to Pauline material—for its content.

Remembering Human Historicity

Paul's other reference to homosexual acts (I Cor. 6:9-10) is similar to that of the writer of I Timothy (1:8-11). Both passages list practices that exclude people from the kingdom—acts that dishonor God and harm the neighbor, including thievery, drunkenness, kidnapping, lying and the like. Thus, if it is apparent that here homosexual acts are not singled out for special condemnation, it could also be argued that there was general disapproval. What, then are we to make of Paul's moral judgment in this case?

Perhaps we should accept Paul for what he was—a peerless interpreter of the heart of the gospel and one who was also a fallible and historically conditioned person. If the norm of the new humanity in Jesus Christ obliges us to question the Apostle's opinions about the proper status of women and the institution of human slavery, so also that norm obliges us to scrutinize each of his moral judgments regarding its Christian faithfulness for our time—including his perception of homosexuality.

Surely, the central biblical message regarding sexuality is clear enough. Idolatry, the dishonoring of God, inevitably results in the dishonoring of persons. Faithful sexual expression always honors the personhood of the companion. Sexuality is not intended by God as a mysterious and alien force of nature, but as a power to be integrated into one's personhood and used responsibly in the service of love.

A typology of four possible theological stances toward homosexuality can begin with the most negative assessment. A *rejecting-punitive* position unconditionally rejects homosexuality as Christianly

legitimate and bears a punitive attitude toward homosexual persons. While no major contemporary theologians defend this position and while official church bodies have moved away from it, this stance unfortunately is amply represented in Christian history.

If we have been ignorant of the persecutions of homosexuals, it is not without reason. Unlike the recognized histories of other minority groups, there has been no "gay history." Heterosexual historians usually have considered the subject unmentionable, and gay historians have been constrained by the fear of ceasing to be invisible. A conspiracy of silence has resulted. Yet, the facts are there. Stoning, sexual mutilation and the death penalty were fairly common treatment for discovered homosexuals through centuries of the West's history. While the church frequently gave its blessings to civil persecutions, in its internal ecclesiastical practice its disapproval was even more frequently shown through the refusal of sacraments and ostracism from the common life.

The rejecting-punitive stance today may be milder in its usual manifestations, though it continues to bear highly punitive attitudes along with its theological arguments. If the latter are based upon a selective biblical literalism, the former are rooted in familiar stereotypes. All lesbians are hard, and all male gays effeminate; homosexuals are compulsive and sex-hungry; male gays are inherently prone to child molestation; homosexuals are by nature promiscuous. Each of the preceding stereotypes has been thoroughly discounted by reliable research; yet they persist in the minds of many, buttressed by untenable biblical interpretations. But the key criticism of this stance is simply the incongruity of a punitive orientation with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The *rejecting-nonpunitive* stance must be taken more seriously, for no less eminent a theologian than Karl Barth represents this view. Since humanity is "fellow-humanity," says Barth, men and women come into full humanity only in relation to persons of the opposite sex. To seek one's humanity in a person of the same sex is to seek "a substitute for the despised partner," and as such it constitutes "physical, psychological and social sickness, the phenomenon of perversion, decadence and decay." This is idolatry, for one who seeks the same-sex union is simply seeking oneself: self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency. While Barth says homosexuality thus is unnatural and violates the command of the Creator, he hastens to add that the central theme of the gospel is God's overwhelming grace in Jesus Christ. Hence, homosexuality must be condemned, but the homosexual *person* must not.

William Muehl argues for the rejecting-nonpunitive position from a more consequentialist stance. Maintaining that "the fundamental function of sex is procreation" and that homosexuality is an illness comparable to alcoholism, Muehl then turns his major attention to social consequences. Sheer acceptance of homosexuality would have "implications for our view of marriage, the limitations appropriate to sexual activity, the raising of children and the structure of the family." Since we are relatively ignorant concerning such potentially grave social results, Muehl argues, we should respect the historic position of the church, which rejects homosexuality.

The rejecting-nonpunitive stance appears to rest upon two major stated arguments and two major unstated assumptions—each open to serious question. The first stated argument is that of natural law and idolatry. At this point Barth seems to forget our human historicity, apparently assuming that human nature is an unchangeable, once-and-for-all substance given by the Creator. Actually, our human nature is shaped in some significant part by the interaction of people in specific periods of time with specific cultural symbols and specific historic environments. Committed to this alternative interpretation, Gregory Baum fittingly writes, “In other words, human nature as it is at present is not normative for theologians. . . . What is normative for normal life is the human nature to which we are divinely summoned, which is defined in terms of mutuality. This, at least, is the promise of biblical religion.” After examining the evidence of mutual fulfillment in committed gay couples, Father Baum concludes: “Homosexual love, then, is not contrary to human nature, defined in terms of mutuality toward which mankind is summoned.”

Is Sex Orientation Chosen?

Barth's idolatry judgments appear to rest upon several additional—and equally questionable—assumptions. One is that procreative sex is divinely commanded and normative. Yet, in light of the gospel and of our current human situation, we might better say that while responsible love and sexual expression cannot be sundered, procreation and sex cannot be irrevocably joined. Another assumption is that there can be no “fellow humanity” apart from the opposite sex. But is it not more biblical to maintain that there is no genuine humanity apart from *community*?

Still another assumption is that homosexuality means a “despising” of the other sex—an assertion without logical or factual foundation. Indeed, many homosexuals exhibit the ability to establish deeply meaningful and loving relationships with members of the opposite sex precisely because sexual “conquest,” in whatever form, is excluded from the situation. And the logic of Barth's argument at this point would seem to be that *heterosexuals* by their nature should despise members of *their own sex*. Finally, Barth maintains that homosexuality is idolatrous because it is basically self-worship. It is as if the classic syllogism were to be changed to read as follows: “I love men; Socrates is a man; therefore, I love myself.” Non sequitur. In actuality, compared with heterosexual couples committed gay couples show no intrinsic or qualitative differences in their capacities for self-giving love.

The second major argument of the rejecting-nonpunitive position is that undesirable social consequences probably would result from homosexual acceptance. This argument appears to rest upon a major unspoken assumption: that homosexuals in fact do have meaningful choice about their same-sex orientation. If one makes this assumption, then one might (as Muehl appears to do) draw a further conclusion: that societal acceptance would bring in its wake a significant increase in the numbers of those choosing homosexuality.

Such assumptions must be radically questioned. Actually, statistics show no demonstrable increase in

homosexual behavior in the quarter century since Kinsey's study, in spite of somewhat less punitive social attitudes in recent years. Further, it is probable that greater acceptance of homosexuality would have desirable consequences for families and child-rearing: Emotional intimacy among same-sex heterosexual family members would be less inhibited by unrecognized homosexual fears, and syndromes of alienation and destructive rejection of the homosexual child in the family would be lessened.

The great majority of homosexuals do not appear to have meaningful choice concerning their orientation any more than do the great majority of heterosexuals. There exists today no general agreement about the cause of homosexuality. Major theories cluster around two different approaches, the psychogenic and the



genetic, but both remain in dispute. It is significant, however, that in 1973 the Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from that association's list of mental disorders, saying, “Homosexuality per se implies no impairment in judgment, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capabilities.”

Moral Responsibility and Self-Acceptance

The minority of gay persons who have sought therapeutic treatment to reverse their sex orientation have experienced an extremely low success rate. Behavioral modification programs using aversive therapy have conditioned some homosexuals against attraction to their own sex, but most frequently they have been unable to replace that with attraction to the opposite sex, a dehumanizing result. Indeed, Dr. Gerald C. Davison, who developed and popularized the “orgasmic reorientation” technique, recently disavowed his own treatment, calling upon behavior therapists to “stop engaging in voluntary therapy programs aimed at altering the choice of adult partners.”

The other underlying assumption appears to be this: that theological positions and ecclesiastical practices which reject homosexuality can, in fact, be nonpunitive toward those persons so oriented. This, too, must be radically questioned, and we shall do so in the context of the next major position.

The third major theological option is that of the qualified acceptance of homosexuality. Helmut Thielicke provides its best articulation. His argument follows several steps. First, similar to Barth's contention, Thielicke maintains, "The fundamental order of creation and the created determination of the two sexes make it appear justifiable to speak of homosexuality as a 'perversion' . . . [which] is in every case not in accord with the order of creation." But Thielicke is more open than Barth to the results of contemporary psychological and medical research. Thus, he takes a second step: "But now experience shows that constitutional homosexuality at any rate is largely unsusceptible to medical or psychotherapeutic treatment, at least so far as achieving the desired goal of a fundamental conversion to normality is concerned." Further, homosexuality as a predisposition ought not to be depreciated any more than the varied distortions of the created order in which all fallen people share.

But what of sexual expression? If the homosexual can change his or her sexual orientation, such a person should seek to change. Admittedly, however, most cannot. Then such persons should seek to sublimate their homosexual desires and not act upon them. But some constitutional homosexuals "because of their vitality" are not able to practice abstinence. If that is the case, they should structure their sexual relationships "in an ethically responsible way" (in adult, faithfully committed relationships). Homosexuals should make the best of their painful situations, without idealizing them or pretending that they are normal.

More than Barth and Muehl, Thielicke is empirically informed and pastorally sensitive on this issue. But his position is still grounded in an unacceptably narrow and rigid version of natural law. As such, in spite of its greater humanness his argument becomes self-contradictory. In effect the gay person is told, "We heterosexual Christians sympathize with your plight, and we believe that any sexual expression in which you engage must be done in an ethically responsible way—but do not forget that you are a sexual pervert!"

An ethics of the gospel ought never forget that moral responsibility is intrinsically related to self-acceptance, and that self-acceptance is intrinsically related to acceptance by significant others and, ultimately, by God. Gay persons in our society frequently have been told by their families that they do not belong to them, by the church that they are desperate sinners because of their sexual orientation, by the medical profession that they are sick, and by the law that they are criminals. In the face of such rejection, the amazing thing is that so many are emotionally stable and sexually responsible. If emotional problems still have a higher incidence among gay persons (as they do within any oppressed social group), we should cut through the vicious circle of self-fulfilling prophecy and recognize where the root of the problem lies—in societal oppression. Thielicke fails to do this. More humane though his position is, by continuing to label same-sex orientation as a perversion of God's natural law, he encourages continuing punitive attitudes toward homosexuals and in consequence undercuts his own hope for more responsible sexual relationships.

Realizing Our Intended Humanity

The fourth major theological possibility is full acceptance. While it usually makes the assumption that homosexual orientation is much more a given than a free choice, even more fundamentally this position rests upon the conviction that same-sex relationships are fully capable of expressing God's humanizing intentions.

Though still in a minority, the advocates of full Christian acceptance are increasing in number. In 1963 the English Friends stated in their widely read *Towards a Quaker View of Sex*: "One should no more deplore 'homosexuality' than left-handedness. . . . Homosexual affection can be as selfless as heterosexual affection, and therefore we cannot see that it is in some way morally worse."

Among individual theologians Norman Pittenger has articulated this position most fully. God, he affirms, is the "Cosmic Lover," ceaselessly and unfaithfully in action as love, and manifested supremely in Jesus Christ. God's abiding purpose for humankind is that in response to divine action we should realize our intended humanity as human lovers—in the richest, broadest and most responsible sense of the term. Our embodied sexuality is the physiological and psychological base for our capacity to love.

For all of its continuity with animal sexuality, human sexuality is different: As persons our sexuality means the possibility of expressing and sharing a total personal relationship in love. And such expression contributes immeasurably toward the destiny to which we are all intended. Hence, abnormality or deviance should not be defined statistically, but rather in reference to the norm of humanity in Jesus Christ. Gay persons desire and need deep and lasting relationships, just as do heterosexual persons, and appropriate genital expression should be denied to neither.

Thus, the ethical question according to Pittenger is this: What sexual behavior will serve and enhance, rather than inhibit, damage or destroy, our fuller realization of divinely intended humanity? The appropriate answer is a sexual ethics of love. This means commitment and trust, tenderness, respect for the other, and the desire for ongoing and responsible communion with the other. On its negative side such an ethics of love mandates against selfish sexual expression, cruelty, impersonal sex, obsession with sex, and against actions done without willingness to take responsibility for their consequences. Such an ethics always asks about the meaning of any particular sexual act in the total context of the persons involved, in the context of their society, and in the context of that direction which God desires for human life. It is an ethics equally appropriate for both homosexual and heterosexual Christians. There is no double standard.

It is obvious by this point that my own convictions favor the full Christian acceptance of homosexuality and its responsible genital expression. I have felt quite personally the force of each of the other stances described in this article, for at various earlier periods in my life I have identified, in turn, with each one—beginning as a teenager with the full complement of anti-homosexual stereotypes. In recent years, both through theological-ethical reflection and through personal friendships with some remarkable gay

persons, I have become increasingly convinced that the positions of both Barth and Thielicke inadequately express the implications of the gospel on this issue.

Homosexuality: A Heterosexual Problem?

Reinhold Niebuhr has powerfully argued that Christians must learn to live with the tension of "having and not having the truth." "Tolerance" in its truest sense, he maintained, is experienced when, on the one hand, a person can have vital convictions that lead to committed action and, on the other hand, that same person can live within the reality of forgiveness. The latter means experiencing divine forgiveness for the distortion of one's own understanding and having the willingness to accept those whose convictions sincerely differ. Hopefully, it is in such spirit that this personal note is written, and in such spirit the heterosexual reader is invited to wonder with me at this point about three possibilities.

One possibility is that "the homosexual problem" may be more truly a heterosexual problem. We are learning that "the Black problem" is basically the problem of white racism, and that "the woman problem" is basically the problem of male sexism. So, also, we might well wonder whether or not "the homosexual problem" could be rooted in a homophobia frequently experienced by heterosexuals.

My own experience suggests this. While in the preceding paragraphs, for the sake of economy, I have simply used the terms "heterosexual" and "homosexual" (or "gay"), the best available evidence indicates that we are all bisexual to some degree. True, most of us, for reasons not yet fully understood, develop a dominant orientation toward one or the other side of the continuum. But Kinsey's early research repeatedly has been confirmed: On the scale of sexual orientation relatively few persons fall near the "zero" end (exclusively heterosexual) and relatively few approach the "six" mark (exclusively homosexual).

Though, for the majority of us, our adult genital expression may have been exclusively heterosexual, it is quite probable that we do experience homosexual feelings even if such are frequently relegated to the unconscious level. And males in our society generally have the greater difficulty with this, inasmuch as we have been continuously subjected to exaggerated images of masculinity. Thus, I believe it is worth pondering whether some of our common reactions against homosexuality might be linked to secret fears of homosexual feelings in ourselves—Freud's "reaction formation," defending against an impulse felt in oneself by attacking it in others.

Gay people may also represent threats to us in other related ways. The gay man seems to belie the importance of "super-masculinity," and his very presence calls into question so much that "straight" males have sacrificed in order to be manly. Homosexuals appear to disvalue commonly held public values related to marriage, family and children. Because we so frequently judge others by our own standards, those who obviously deviate from them appear to be seriously deviant. And, strangely enough, homosexuals may awaken in heterosexuals a dimly recognized fear of death. Sometimes our hopes of vicarious immortality through our children and

grandchildren are stronger than our resurrection faith. Then the presence of the gay person who (usually) does not have children may reawaken the fear of death, even though its conscious experience may be a nameless anxiety. I wonder.

Second, I wonder how much of the heterosexual reaction against homosexuality is related to male sexism. I suspect that some of our responses are. Surely, the more severe biblical condemnation of male homosexuality was not unrelated to the status of the male in a patriarchal society. For a man to act sexually like a woman was serious degradation (literally loss of grade). And in our own society, where male sexism remains a serious problem, it is still the male who more commonly experiences homophobia. Indeed, the striking parallelism between so many arguments against homosexual acceptance and arguments against full acceptance of women-men equality ought to make us reflect upon this.

Third, I wonder about the possibilities of augmented liberation for us all were a greater acceptance of homosexuality to come. Many of us have experienced some diminution of our own homophobia bringing new possibilities of tenderness, lessened competitiveness and greater emotional intimacy with those of our own sex. Many of us males have become more conscious of the connection between the uses of violence and our needs for assurance of our virility, and we wonder whether greater understanding and acceptance of our own homosexual impulses might not well contribute to a more peaceful society. The list of liberating possibilities could be expanded, but perhaps the point is clear. In any event, I wonder about the relation between Jesus' apparent silence concerning homosexuality and Jesus as the image of authentic human liberation.

Precisely because we must live with "having and not having the truth," it is important that we share our serious wonderings. Perceptions of sincere Christians will differ on this issue, but we can all attempt to invite each other into our quests for fuller understanding of that humanity into which God invites us all.

Some Implications for the Church

The church's firm support of civil rights for gay persons ought not depend upon agreement concerning the theological and ethical appropriateness of the homosexual orientation or of specific same-sex acts. Civil rights support ought to be considered an expression of Christian concern for basic social justice.

The present legal situation is still very uneven. Some states and municipalities have legislated civil protection for gay persons, while others (the majority) have not. Most states still have punitive legislation on their books, though in actual practice enforcement is varied and often unpredictable. In any event, laws labeling "sodomy" or "unnatural sexual intercourse" as punishable offenses have a number of inherent problems. They violate the rights of privacy. They are ineffective and virtually unenforceable except through objectionable methods such as entrapment and enticement. However, enforced or not, sodomy laws stigmatize as criminal the person whose only crime is preference for the same sex, and inevitably such laws have considerable effect upon the gay individual's

sense of self-worth. Further, an important principle of church-state separation is involved. What some Christians on fairly narrow doctrinal grounds consider a sin ought not to be made a crime unless that moral judgment can be defended on broader grounds of public interest and unless the behavior in question constitutes a demonstrable threat to human well-being and public welfare.

Beyond the civil rights issue, if and when churches were to affirm homosexuality and its responsible expression as fully appropriate to those persons so constituted, the implications for church life would be many, and their implementation might well be complex.

What about the full acceptance of gay Christians in the ongoing life of congregations? Because such acceptance still is largely absent, the movement toward congregations organized principally for gay persons will undoubtedly continue. This movement is completely understandable, but regrettable, for the majority's lack of acceptance then continues to fragment the body of Christ.

To be sure, congregational affirmation of gay persons would involve significant attitudinal changes on the part of many heterosexual Christians. With full acceptance, for example, all of those gestures and behaviors appropriate to heterosexuals in church gatherings must be affirmed for homosexuals as well. This should mean, then, no double standards concerning the hand-holding couple, the kiss of greeting or the appropriate partner at the church dance.

The ordination question continues to be difficult. Not only division over theological and ethical issues but also differing patterns of ministerial placement and job security cause deep concern for many otherwise sympathetic church leaders. While no doubt there are presently ordained homosexual ministers in every major denomination, the vast majority of them continue secrecy about their sexual orientation. Only one major denomination has ordained a stated homosexual: The Rev. William R. Johnson was ordained by the United Church of Christ in 1972 and then only after prolonged study and debate in his association.

The recommendation made by the United Church's Executive Council in 1973, if difficult to implement, is the appropriate stance: "It [the Executive Council] recommends to associations that in the instance of considering a stated homosexual's candidacy for ordination the issue should not be his/her homosexuality as such, but rather the candidate's total view of human sexuality and his/her understanding of the morality of its use." This, indeed, is the logic of full acceptance. It is not the gay person's sexual orientation that would cause difficulty in ministerial leadership, but rather the misunderstandings and prejudices held by those whom he or she would lead. (Should a dominantly white denomination ordain Black persons to the ministry? The parallel with racism seems clear.)

Most difficult of all gay-related questions for the present denominational church is that of homosexual marriage. The ordinance of marriage has a very long theological and ecclesiastical history, and that history is a heterosexual one. Profound symbols are organic. They must grow and develop, and sudden changes in their understanding cannot successfully be legislated.

Marriage, involving a wife and a husband and the possibility of children, is clearly a heterosexual symbol.

But new rites can be created to meet legitimate needs unmet by existing symbols. There are, indeed, gay Christian couples living in long-term, permanently intended covenantal relationships who earnestly desire the affirmation of their religious communion. A "blessing of union" rite (by whatever name) could function in ways not identical but parallel to marriage rites. Such an ordinance could give the church's recognition, sanction and support to a union whose intention is lasting and faithful. Indeed, if the church encourages responsible sexual expression among gay persons and then denies them its ritual and communal support, it engages in hypocrisy. If and when the church moves toward such liturgical recognition, it should also work for legal recognition of homosexual unions, involving such matters as tax laws and inheritance rights.

The ecclesiastical implications of full acceptance are undoubtedly complex. Very understandably, however, many gay Christians are tired of waiting for such complexities to be resolved. They have waited—and hurt—long enough. Their impatience, I believe, is a call for repentance and for urgent work by the rest of us. At its root the basic issue is not about "them," but about us all: What is the nature of that humanity toward which God is pressing us, and what does it mean to be a woman or a man in Jesus Christ? □

energy policy

DATA TO THE PEOPLE

NOW COMES THE SPRING. Forsythia unfold. Green tufts of grass brighten winter's brown. Birds and children play on crisp, sunny days.

Memories of the historically cold winter in the Eastern United States fade. People are back at work. The economic dislocations of the February natural gas blockages ease. Our sense of urgency about the energy supply dissipates. As the great outdoor season approaches, we listen languidly as gas company public relations teams rush through explanations of why company profits were so high in the first two months of 1977.

The immediate crunch is behind us. We've survived a second attack in a little over three years on the heart of the American economy. If we don't worry about it, maybe we'll muddle through.

The night before writing this article, I went to sleep full of thoughts about our recent natural gas

imbroglio. And—honestly—I dreamed of a lead for the story. It started: “Millions of Americans believe that the recent shortages of natural gas were created by energy producers holding back supplies. But they cannot prove it. I agree with them, but I cannot prove it. Unfortunately for us all, our Government cannot prove it either.” And later in the night came visions of some kind of national shout, surely suggested by the movie *Network*, where we, like the movie’s maddened Peter Finch, raised our windows and screamed: “We’re mad as hell, and we’re not going to take it anymore.”

If I dreamed the lead, the content over which my subconscious pondered is producing a national nightmare. Screaming may make us feel better for the moment, but it does little to solve the problem. We don’t have any handles for dealing with the growing energy threat to us and our nation.

Not that the past winter’s problem is so difficult to understand. The bitter cold created a surge in demand greater than the pipelines that deliver the gas could handle and beyond reserve supplies. It is fair to say that the supplies might have sufficed had this winter been as warm as the past few. A considerable body of evidence exists, however, which suggests that the worst of the disruptions would not have occurred had the producers felt it was to their advantage to produce more gas.

Several producers readily confirm that they have gas reservoirs that are not in production or only partially so. Their arguments have an internal logic. In Texas and Louisiana gas can be sold at a price often double what it would bring if sold to other states. The US economy has never expected entrepreneurs to sell their wares below a market maximum. So producers can sell their gas within the state and hold their surplus until the nation comes to its senses and allows interstate prices to reach the intrastate range.

Market control and skillful maneuvering are required to push prices upward on a product like gas where true production costs are very low (as they are with oil). While natural gas now accounts for about 30 percent of US energy usage, given a competitive situation sufficient gas already exists to satisfy demand at a medium price for decades to come. Only by a perceived shortage of gas can prices be forced up to the level the producers want.

The gas industry has tried in recent years to convince us that the gas reserves remaining underground are dwindling dangerously. The trend can be reversed, they promise, if the prices are high enough to make further exploration and production attractive.

Here is the place for anger. No one but the producers knows whether they are telling the truth about their reserves. They give some information to their trade group, the American Gas Association (AGA), but hearings before a House subcommittee headed by Rep. John Moss have demonstrated that the largest gas producers dominate the data-gathering process, even naming their own personnel to the AGA’s evaluation team that makes annual estimates of reserves.

Clearly, the figures given to the AGA are more helpful to the companies if they underrate the available gas. But, as a *Reader’s Digest* roving editor, James Nathan Miller, has suggested (*The New Republic*, Feb. 12), a more crucial reason for lying exists.

The Supreme Court ruled in 1968 that the Federal

Price Commission could let producers *increase* the price of gas whenever the AGA’s figures showed that their rate of new discoveries had *decreased*. Thus, the fewer new discoveries the producers tell the AGA about, the more they can charge their customers. Interestingly enough, the first drastic drop in the new-discovery figures appeared in the AGA statistics that were issued a few months after this landmark decision.

So we had a short crimp in the gas supply that scared the nation for a few weeks this winter. Since then the petroleum industry has assaulted us with two essential messages: Decontrol natural gas (i.e., let us raise the prices), and cut out this ecological nonsense.

Beyond Personal Conservation

Some time in April President Carter is going to lay before the nation and the Congress a comprehensive energy plan. And we and our representatives will be asked to make decisions—such as the possible deregulation of gas—with *no real knowledge* of whether we have an energy shortage or not. This is absurd.

One thing is clear. What the large petroleum corporations tell us cannot be trusted. If nothing else raises our suspicions, the fact that they always profit from “crises” should. In 1973 Michael Morrow and I were in the middle of a book on oil in Asia from our Singapore vantage point when the Arab states in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) embargoed their petroleum exports. It was soon obvious that the resulting higher oil prices were so favorable to the oil companies that they were at the least secretly happy about the new pricing structure. We also suspected outright collusion.

The way the oil giants profited from the 1973 dislocation is now documented in a remarkable new book, *The Control of Oil*. Written by the late John Blair, who for 30 years followed the petroleum industry as chief economist of the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly (associated with the names of Estes Kefauver and Philip A. Hart), *The Control of Oil* provides more usable information about the way the industry operates than any other source I know. Acknowledging that “no other industry begins to offer the data problems presented by petroleum,” Blair asks why, after the temporary shortages of 1973, “the price remained at its new, stratospheric level.” Had the majors simply been buyers of crude oil, the sharp rise in costs should have narrowed their profit margins. But because they control the marketing process as well, the companies passed along the costs, which resulted in “a dramatic increase in profits.”

For purposes of understanding the current natural gas problem, Blair’s most useful section demonstrates the amazing way the giant firms monitored increased production of oil from 1952 through 1975. With almost no variation, worldwide production outside the socialist countries rose at an annual average of 9.55 percent. At several points, not least in 1974 and 1975, surpluses threatened to produce competition that would lower oil’s price. Without the oil companies, Blair argues convincingly, OPEC would have fragmented on this problem.

Exxon is the world's largest producer of natural gas. Eighteen of the top 20 American producers are major oil companies. Obviously, Blair's argument applies to the gas market as much as to oil. The long lines at the gasoline pumps in late 1973 softened Americans to accepting any price for gasoline as long as the supply was made available. Now we find echoes of that experience in the natural gas blockages. Listen to a March 1977 "question and answer" prepared by Mobil Oil's public relations staff. "Q. If price regulation were ended, how high would prices go? A. What should concern consumers most is an assured supply of natural gas."

A single national energy agency has been proposed by President Carter. It will have the task of wringing some order out of our energy chaos. The questions it will face loop around each other. To this point the Carter emphasis has been on individual efforts to conserve gas and oil: reducing thermostats, insulating attics, purchasing small cars. It's a good enough place to start. Without question a nation that wastes half its energy needs to recover some of its once-vaunted efficiency. Higher gasoline prices might be one way to accomplish that. Higher prices of natural gas, now considerably cheaper than oil, might conserve that clean, efficient fuel source.

Over the longer term oil and gas—which are irreplaceable and being consumed at an alarming rate, especially by Americans—will run out. Higher prices might well be part of a conservation component in a national energy program, but the burden of this article is that the income from higher prices should not go to the oil and gas companies. For decades they have rationed the flow of petroleum, not to conserve it but to create the prices they want.

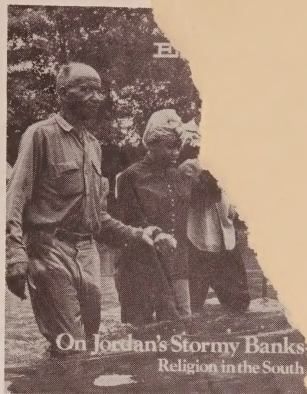
Some would argue that the Government should raise prices by taxes that would be used to fund research into alternate energy forms, create mass transit and the like. Others call for nationalization of the companies, arguing that anything as vital to the national economy as energy supply can no longer be left to private enterprise. John Blair led the fight for yet another alternative, "divestiture"—under which the oil companies would be forced to choose the area of the petroleum industry they would wish to operate in, restoring competition and thereby preventing the giants from acting as a cartel to maintain the prices they want.

Apart from these options, a rational energy policy means going beyond personal conservation and even beyond restructuring the oil industry. It will require major sectors of the economy—automobiles, agriculture and steel are examples—to change the way they approach energy use.

But none of these reforms has a chance of happening if we don't first insist that our Government stop depending on the oil companies for the information it needs to make national energy policies. And even that essential first step won't be taken without a national shout of anger: "We're mad as hell, and we're not going to take it anymore."

LEON HOWELL

Leon Howell, a frequent contributor to these pages, lives and works as a free-lance writer in Washington, D.C. He is co-author, with Michael Morrow, of *Asia, Oil Politics and the Energy Crisis*.



On Jordan's Stormy Banks

An alternative to the simplistic notion about Southern religion. A book-length collection of articles and interviews exploring the relationship between religion and Southern politics and culture. Including:

Thelma Stevens on women in the church.
John Lewis: religion and the civilrights movement.
Will Campbell on receiving "The Call."
Billy Graham as "Superstar": a look at evangelism.
Growing up Southern Baptist
A Mighty Fortress: Protestant Power in the South.
Country Music goes back to church singing.
Being Catholic and Jewish in the Bible Belt.
Granny Reed: The Holiness Experience.
Cecil Cone on black liberation theology.

"I know of no other source which is so up-to-date and so readable."

— William G. McLoughlin, co-author,
 Religion in America

"This impressive volume contributes substantially to our continuing effort to plumb the black experience in religion."

— C. Eric Lincoln, author,
 The Black Experience in Religion

Enclosed is \$2.50 for *On Jordan's Stormy Banks* and a brochure describing other issues of the quarterly journal, *Southern Exposure*.

My name is _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Make checks payable to Southern Exposure and mail with this coupon to Box 230, Chapel Hill, NC 27514)



PMF TAKES YOUR NEEDS AND PROVIDES THE SOLUTION

You don't spend over 200 years serving Religious Professionals as we have without acquiring a wealth of knowledge about their economic needs and how they can best be met. It adds up to one thing — better financial security for you.

Because Religious Professionals have needs that require special solutions, we've developed a wide-range of insurance and retirement plans with your circumstances in mind. Your PMF representative will help you select the most suitable program for your situation.

So, whatever your needs — family protection in the event of your death,

mortgage insurance, savings for college, or a tax-sheltered retirement plan — meet them with low-cost plans from PMF. We take your needs and provide the solution. After all, that's our ministry.

Call, or write, today for information or assistance. Our toll-free number is 800-523-4810 (in Pennsylvania, 800-462-4950).



1809 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

AN INTERFAITH LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY FOR RELIGIOUS PROFESSIONALS



Christianity and Crisis

Vol. 37, Nos. 9 & 10,

May 30 & June 13, 1977: \$1 a copy

A special issue on

HOMOSEXUALITY

The debate in the churches over the ordination of homosexuals raises the fundamental question: Is homosexual practice morally wrong?

The traditional condemnation of homosexuality brings great suffering to gays, gives straights a seeming license for cruelty.

Homosexuals themselves assert that they did not choose their orientation but discovered it. Research increasingly supports this assertion.

The scriptural and theological bases on which condemnation of homosexuality has been founded are under challenge. The condemnation itself, and the treatment of homosexual persons which flows from it, are out of harmony with the central message of Christian revelation.

THEREFORE...

The Debate on Homosexuality

We Vote For Change

A COURTEOUS LETTER from a new subscriber responds to James B. Nelson's article "Homosexuality and the Church" (April 4 issue) by expressing disagreement and asking: "... [A]re you going to print the other side, or have you already done so? If so, may I have a copy of that edition?"

The letter is worth quoting further:

I realize that this is going to be a gigantic issue in the church which could well destroy much of the unity we have worked for these past years. No matter which way the decision goes, many people are going to be hurt and bitter. I can see Nelson's article as an attempt to find a middle ground on which the Christian can accept the gay life style, but I can't buy it.

Our correspondent, a pastor in Indiana who is also engaged in graduate work, reports that he has had a number of friends among the gay people at his university:

They know my position, which is to accept them as persons without public or private judgmental criticism and allow them to be responsible before God, who will judge what is right and wrong in his time. . . . Personally I think he already has said enough in the scriptures, but at the same time I am not willing to throw away my friends. To me, my own position sounds wishy-washy and a rationalization, and I fear for what is going to happen in the Church of Jesus Christ on earth. However, the greatest issue I see is how Christians can deal with this problematic issue in love and understanding rather than in hatred and cruelty.

If we had invented this letter for the purpose of introducing the present issue, it could not be more useful. The first order of business is a direct response to its queries. No, there is no previous issue of *C&C* arguing the other side of the question; and No, there is no present intention of publishing an article or issue making a case against Dr. Nelson's position, which favors "the full Christian acceptance of homosexuality and its responsible genital expression."

Why not? One way to learn our reasons is to read the material in this issue. Apart from Tracy Early's reportorial survey, all the articles take a stand on the question. Though there are differences of nuance and

emphasis, their authors are all in substantial accord with the position articulated earlier by Dr. Nelson. We do not find these statements merely interesting or challenging, merely worthy of a hearing. We find them persuasive.

Originally this issue of *C&C* was to be more narrowly focused; it was to address the question of church policy on the ordination of declared homosexuals. That subject has its own complexities; if mainline denominations ordain gay ministers, for example, will they serve only in predominantly gay congregations? It became clear, however, that the real question the churches must deal with is not a matter only of policy or polity. What will it *mean* if churches ordain gays? In short, there is an antecedent ethical issue: Is homosexuality as a way of life wrong?

Our Indiana correspondent concludes his letter by repeating: "I don't know the answer, and the best I can do is to suspend judgment for the time until God speaks again." We don't *know* the answer either, and we claim no special illumination. The difficulty for the churches is that to suspend judgment is no longer a possible course. When decisions are necessary, we have to presume that God's will can be discerned, if we have eyes to see, in the evidence at hand. In our reading of the evidence there is no longer a tenable case for excluding homosexuals from *full* participation in the life of the church and of society.

We also believe that it is time, or past time, for people who have arrived at this conviction to give it voice. This is not an immediately obvious conclusion. As Peggy Way makes clear in autobiographical passages of her essay, such declarations are not without risks; in affirming the rights of homosexuals, a person (or a journal) may lose effectiveness on other issues. Ms. Way also points out that sexuality itself, including the issue of homosexuality, is only one aspect of human life, and not the most central.

As many readers will disagree with the journal's view, and some will object strongly, why single out homosexuality for so thorough a discussion? Why take a stand?

—Because, as Tracy Early has phrased it, this once

untouchable issue is now unavoidable. Though task forces and special commissions of the churches will continue their studies yet a while, the time for decision is approaching, largely because homosexual Christians themselves insist that the issue be confronted.

—Because, given its tradition, it is not appropriate for CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS to await and then endorse (or criticize) whatever consensus may emerge. As an independent religious journal C&C does not speak for the churches but to the churches. A journal of opinion may risk its survival by voicing the wrong opinions, but a journal of opinion without opinions has no reason to survive.

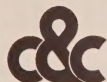
—Finally because, unlike our correspondent, we find it impossible any longer only “to accept them [homosexuals] as persons,” leaving it to God to judge their philosophy and behavior. As a personal pastoral standard, such a stance may be a sufficient guide. It is no longer an adequate or even a possible stance for the churches. They are being asked either to reaffirm or to revise *their* judgment of *God's* judgment. And this demand is coming from within the churches, from persons who have every right to insist on an answer.

What the tradition and the churches generally now proclaim as coming from God is that homosexual acts

are by definition perverse, repugnant and sinful; that homosexuality itself is a distortion of human nature; and that this distortion, whatever its source or cause, regardless of the power it may exert, must be resisted and, if possible, rooted out. This teaching both reflects and confirms the thinking of the heterosexual majority, whose attitudes in turn create the context in which homosexuals live their lives.

Some of the consequences for gay people may be learned from the writings that follow, especially from the concluding section of the article by Peggy Way, the testimonies of Nancy Krody and Louie Crew and the analysis by James Harrison. What they tell us is that homosexuals, because they are homosexuals, are physically abused on occasion, frequently ridiculed or caricatured, subjected constantly to social exclusion and disdain. They are sometimes refused acceptance by their own families; often they are frozen out of religious fellowship and denied pastoral care. They are also denied equal protection of their civil rights and equal access to vocational opportunities. Most of all, regardless of personal qualities and achievements, they are denied personal respect.

Not all heterosexual persons participate in these denials and exclusions; on the other hand, few stand in opposition. This atmosphere of rejection is per-



Christianity and Crisis

A Christian Journal of Opinion
537 West 121st Street/New York/New York 10027

JOHN C. BENNETT/Senior Contributing Editor

Contributing Editors:

FRANK BALDWIN
ROBERT McAFEE BROWN
JAMES H. CONE
HARVEY G. COX
JOHN R. FRY
ROBERT LEKACHMAN
JAMES R. McGRAW
MARGARET MEAD
HOWARD MOODY
ARTHUR J. MOORE
ROSEMARY RUETHER
ROGER L. SHINN
WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW

Staff:

WAYNE H. COWAN/Editor
VIVIAN LINDERMAYER/Managing Editor
ROBERT G. HOYT/Associate Editor
CATHERINE MacDONALD/Assistant Editor
MARILYN SEVEN/Editorial Assistant

Contents:

Page

CONTINUING THE DISCUSSION: 'HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE CHURCH'/ John W. Espy and James B. Nelson	116
THE STRUGGLE IN THE DENOMINATIONS: SHALL GAYS BE ORDAINED?/ Tracy Early	118
HOMOSEXUAL COUNSELING AS A LEARNING MINISTRY/ Peggy Way	123
WOMAN, LESBIAN, FEMINIST, CHRISTIAN/ Nancy E. Krody	131
THE DYNAMICS OF SEXUAL ANXIETY/ James Harrison	136
AT ST. LUKE'S PARISH: THE PEACE OF CHRIST IS NOT FOR GAYS/ Louie Crew	140

Credits:

cover and design by Cord Keller
Christianity and Crisis, Vol. 37, Nos. 9 & 10, May 30 & June 13, 1977

Published biweekly, except monthly in July, August and January, by Christianity and Crisis, Inc., 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027. Subscription price: Canada and U.S., \$10.00; add \$1.00 for foreign postage; students \$8.00. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional mailing offices.
Copyright © 1977 Christianity and Crisis, Inc.

ISSN 0009-5745

vasive; it seems safe to say that a majority of the heterosexual majority feels licensed to inflict a special misery on homosexuals, to treat them cruelly and unfairly and then blame them for any aberrational behavior that may result. Clearly the moral authority of the churches is involved here. Gays are not just different from the majority; they are certified—by the churches—to be *sinfully* different. It follows, even for many practicing Christians, that when gays are the target it is all right to throw the first stone. We submit that an ethical teaching that helps bring such consequences is properly subject to radical challenge.

Moving closer to the core of the issue, we submit further that something is badly out of kilter when the physical character of sexual practices, considered wholly apart from the emotions and commitment these practices may express, is accepted as sufficient grounds for moral condemnation. The real theological problem, we believe, is not that of reconciling acceptance of homosexuality with the scriptural pas-

sages that appear to condemn it, but rather how to reconcile condemnation of homosexuals with the criteria of morality that are truly central to the Christian message. In determining human and ethical uses of sex, it is not the laws of biology we must consult but the law of love. To say this is not to relativize the scriptures or to make our burdens light; on the contrary, it is a hard saying.

It goes without saying that no one is obliged to move further on this issue than his/her conscience will permit, and that we are all obliged to deal with it (as our correspondent urges) "in love and understanding rather than in hatred and cruelty." It is our view, however, that in the church the burden of proof rests on those who would maintain the policy of condemnation and ostracism that is our inheritance. And we believe that not the least consequence of a shift in this policy will be liberation and enlightenment for ourselves.

THE EDITORS

Continuing The Discussion 'Homosexuality and the Church'

We begin this symposium by revisiting an article that, in the minds of the editors, remains integral to the discussion: "Homosexuality and the Church" by James B. Nelson (April 4 issue). This exchange focuses on the opening section of the article, dealing with the interpretation of Scripture with respect to homosexuality. John W. Espy is a student at Yale Divinity School. James Nelson, professor of Christian Ethics at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, sends his response from Cambridge, England, where he is on sabbatical leave.

John W. Espy

IT IS WORTH NOTING that exegesis of scriptural themes in defense of homosexuality by James Nelson has been most negligent. The common tendency is to rely on such all-encompassing hermeneutical statements as Dr. Nelson's "invitation to human

wholeness" in Jesus Christ and to treat other themes as isolated and culturally conditioned.

However, the consistent biblical theme of "covenant," particularly regarding marriage, has important bearings on the question of homosexuality. In Genesis 2 the core of the relationship between man and woman is not simply a "mutuality," replaceable by homosexual love; the claim is that woman is taken out of man, that they are for each other, interdependent and made to be rejoined. This grounds heterosexual relationships, and only these, in God's very purposes for the being, growth and companionship of people. This is what the Bible says about homosexuality as a natural sexual orientation; it leaves no room for it.

We may observe further that Dr. Nelson is wrong to draw from the Onan story in Genesis 38 "the strong procreative emphasis characteristic of the Hebrew interpretation of sexuality." The creation story shows that the foundation of sexuality lies in the natural interdependence of man and woman.

This understanding is upheld as one reads on in the Bible. Further, *purity* in sexual relationships is

shown to be a part of one's total relationship with God. Thus part of the thrust of the Holiness Code in Leviticus is that because of the holiness of God and of his sanctuary, one may not come recklessly and profanely into his presence; as a primary rule of this reverence, it is forbidden to "uncover the nakedness" of whomever one desires—man, woman or beast. These restrictions are placed on sexual expression for the sake of purity and may not be dismissed lightly, whatever one does with such a law expressing the same concern in a merely symbolic way as that about mixed fibers in one's clothing.

The point is holiness, and not just cultic cleanness or the expandable "responsible use of sexuality" that Dr. Nelson finds in these texts. It is impossible to escape the biblical claim that God is holy or the biblical call to walk in holiness. This is of great importance for Christians who would continue as practicing homosexuals, for to receive the Bible as *authoritative* must by definition include receiving it as a guide for one's life; and here it unequivocally calls for purity and righteousness, and in terms that clearly exclude homosexuality.

It may briefly be said that the marriage covenant, as natural and as essential to holiness and so to faithful worship of the one God, is upheld by the prophets and by the gospels. Because the Bible defines "covenant" in exclusively heterosexual terms (only heterosexual relationships are natural), one may say that wherever it is held forth in Scripture, homosexuality is implicitly condemned. Thus, a great part of Paul's cultural "prejudice" is in fact biblical tradition, a longstanding doctrine of the theological and ethical implications of the marriage covenant.

Further, to weaken the force of Romans 1:26ff. on the grounds that only *some* homosexuals sin against nature is an unfortunate case of allowing a text to stand without letting it condemn oneself. Clearly Paul is in line with Genesis and the entire biblical tradition in a flat denial that any such thing as "natural homosexuality" exists; here he describes its unnatural origin, and in I Corinthians 11:8ff., 11ff., he continues that view of the exclusive "naturalness" and interdependence of the male-female relationship; and with this tradition he condemns not only idolatry but all the covenant violations that follow from it. No strong case can be made that the Bible condemns only homosexual *lust* despite Dr. Nelson's "dishonoring of persons" as the only sexual sin; the point is that, whatever the motives, all homosexual practice is impure *as such*, because it denies nature, the interdependence of man and woman, and God's command toward reverence and holiness.

It is indeed unfortunate that society takes an inhumane view of homosexuality while condoning such

breaches of the biblical covenant as premarital intercourse and adultery. As one who seeks to be a biblical Christian, I am not led by this to work for a culture that will exonerate further libertinism but to pray and work for a wider hearing of the Bible's message in all of its bright, sharp, offensive facets and implications. There is a great acceptance for the homosexual in Christ, but it presupposes that the homosexual, like all of us, come as penitent sinner, ready by the grace of God to repudiate past covenant violations and to pursue purity of life and mind in the fear of God and the power of Christ's Spirit.

James B. Nelson

BOTH MR. ESPY AND I want to deal seriously and faithfully with the Bible in matters of sexual ethics. Unfortunately, space does not permit discussion of our apparent differences on the basic question of how one moves from biblical materials to specific moral judgments in the contemporary world. I shall have to limit my reply to the several themes he has raised.

Natural law. The idea of an exclusively heterosexual complementarity embedded in eternal natural law—which Mr. Espy reads in Genesis 2—runs into several serious difficulties: (1) The Hebrew mind, oriented toward the dynamics of history, does not, I believe, teach a clear doctrine of fixed, immutable categories of nature in the tradition of natural law philosophy. (Even Paul, who did borrow certain ideas from the Stoics, uses "nature" in a variety of ways, frequently referring to matters of cultural custom, cf. I Cor. 11:14.)

(2) The biblical writers did not understand homosexuality as a psychosexual orientation over which an individual has little, if any, choice. They assumed that homosexual acts were engaged in by basically heterosexual persons. But, if one's "nature" (if we can use that term) is same-sex oriented, and if heterosexual acts are experienced as deeply contrary to one's own constitution, then such passages as Romans 1:26-27 must be read differently than Mr. Espy apparently does.

(3) A doctrine of exclusive heterosexual complementarity seems to presuppose that there are certain ontologically grounded "masculine" and "feminine" traits. But this overlooks the overwhelming role that culture plays in sex role definition. It covertly demands

women's continued dependency and undercuts the invitation to both sexes to develop, by God's grace, their unique personal wholeness. Finally, it raises immensely difficult questions about the possibilities for celibate persons—including Jesus—if, as Mr. Espy says, "the marriage covenant [is] natural and . . . essential to holiness and so to faithful worship of the one God. . . ."

Purity and holiness. Mr. Espy's interpretation of the Leviticus Holiness Code needs to take more seriously its historical and cultic context. In these passages acts are condemned not because of some intrinsic aberration but because of their association with idolatry (particularly, in the sexual references, to Canaanite idolatry). If Mr. Espy is to select the sexual passages (and only certain of them at that) as ethically binding for Christians—consigning the others to a category of "merely symbolic" representations of holiness—he must still face difficult questions: Should an infraction of the (male) homosexual law deserve the death penalty? Why are female homosexual acts not mentioned? Is there to be a double standard? Why does the fear of male homosexuality appear to be so closely bound with female subordination in a patriarchal society?

Though Christians are to live by grace and not under the domination of the law, surely there is still relevance in Leviticus' central message: Because Yahweh is our God and Yahweh is holy, we, too, are called to holiness. And holiness in the message of Leviticus is faithfulness and separation from everything idolatrous. Persons today, whether heterosexual or homosexual, who make their sexuality the central organizing principle of their lives are, indeed, subject to the judgment of idolatry. But we in the heterosexual

majority are undoubtedly deserving of a particular judgment: Quite typically (and quite cruelly) we have insisted that the gay person must be centrally defined and evaluated on the basis of sexual orientation, and not essentially as a unique child of God.

Grace. Mr. Espy seems to hold to a doctrine of conditional grace: God's acceptance (of any of us) presupposes our repudiation of past covenant violations. This comes uncomfortably close to works-righteousness and to a dilution of what I take to be the Gospel's message of radical grace. Further, as applied to gay persons it seems to rest upon several assumptions: that one's sexual orientation is a result of meaningfully free choice; that acts of committed gay love are intrinsically inferior in motivation, intention and consequences for human enrichment; and that, by definition, the covenant expressed in a gay union cannot be faithful. For reasons I have expressed in my article I must reject these assumptions.

The central norm of Christian ethics. I have argued for a single standard for Christian sexual ethics regardless of one's affectional orientation. That standard is love. Indeed, this relativizes our understandings of "nature," and it forces us continually to reevaluate our notions of "holiness." But love as defined in Jesus Christ is neither sentimental nor slack. It mandates a rigorous ethics. It calls the church to an ongoing task of transforming its moral practices and traditions.

Thus, I would join Mr. Espy in urging faithfulness to the Bible's message "in its bright, sharp, offensive facets and implications." But we differ on some hermeneutical procedures and in some theological assumptions. Therefore, on the issue of homosexuality, we find the offense in different places. □

The Struggle in the Denominations Shall Gays Be Ordained?

Tracy Early

IN ONLY 10 YEARS the question of ordaining homosexuals has gone from the unthinkable stage to the unavoidable—at least as an issue requiring thought and decision.

TRACY EARLY is a free-lance journalist specializing in religion who has contributed previously to these pages. He writes frequently for "The Christian Science Monitor." The author wishes to acknowledge the generous assistance of Religious News Service in the preparation of this article.

Church officials were always aware that some homosexuals had been ordained; but generally it was considered a scandal whenever a case became public, and people preferred not to think about it. Now, however, ordination candidates are forcing the issue by declaring openly that they are homosexual. And they are making this declaration without expressing any sense of repentance, any intention or even desire to change

their pattern of sexual activity.

In the past tolerant officials perhaps knew that certain candidates were homosexual, but they ordained them anyway, reasoning that no sinful candidates would ever be found. Now the issue is presented in a way that makes it difficult to ordain homosexuals without implying moral approval of their behavior.

These changes regarding ordination have occurred simultaneously with developments in society at large, particularly the decision of many homosexuals to declare themselves openly and fight for acceptance. In the ecclesiastical sphere the new situation began to develop in 1968, when the Rev. Troy Perry organized a denomination oriented to the homosexual community. He had been a minister in the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.) but was asked to leave when he revealed his homosexuality to a district overseer. Perry's decision to form a new denomination rather than slip into obscurity did not immediately involve the ordination issue, but it put before the nation a homosexual openly insisting on his role as a Christian minister.

Perry has continued to move about the country, and his denomination, the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, has grown so that it now reports more than 100 congregations in the US and other countries. (In 1976 it was included for the first time in the *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, a publication of the National Council of Churches. A listing in the *Yearbook* signifies nothing officially, but it does reflect a sort of acknowledgment that the church has become part of the religious scene.)

So with a growing number of well-publicized congregations deliberately oriented towards homosexuals and led by homosexual ministers, the idea of homosexual clergy no longer was unthinkable.

The issue has emerged most insistently in mainline Protestant member churches of the NCC. The United Church of Christ (UCC) tackled the question in 1972, when the Golden Gate Association in California ordained a self-declared homosexual, William R. Johnson. The denomination's Council on Church and Ministry had advised against it, but under UCC polity the local association has the right of final decision. The issue was expected to come up during the 1973 General Synod, but—reportedly because of an overcrowded agenda—it was referred to the Executive Council. This body, in turn, asked the Council on Church and Ministry to take up the question again. And this time that council wrote a statement advising associations that the issue should not be "homosexuality as such" but an ordination candidate's "total view of human sexuality." Since then some associations may have ordained known homo-

sexuals, but no cases have been publicized.

In 1975 Edward and Margaret Hougen, a UCC clergy couple with two young children, got extensive publicity when he declared from his Orange, Mass. pulpit that he was homosexual and she reported that she had extramarital sexual relationships. When they subsequently moved to Boston, where he became pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church (which had been rejected for membership in the Massachusetts Council of Churches), their ministerial standing in their former UCC association was revoked. The Metropolitan Boston Association then refused to give them standing, not only because neither was serving a UCC congregation or agency and he was affiliated with another denomination, but also because of their "stated views and practices in marriage." (Johnson, meanwhile, remains a minister in good standing, though he has not been serving a UCC church or agency, and is engaged in graduate study, counseling, teaching and speaking on homosexual issues.)

The UCC Board of Homeland Ministries has prepared a study document on human sexuality, and will present it to the denomination's General Synod in Washington, D.C., (July 1-5) for possible referral to local churches. It does not deal with ordination directly, but discusses homosexuality along with other issues.

Most Divisive Issue since Slavery?

Ordination of homosexuals became the subject of nationwide debate among United Methodists in January 1974, when the church's Council on Youth Ministry (now National Youth Ministry Organization) adopted a resolution declaring that homosexuality should not be a bar to the ministry. Charles Keysor, editor of the United Methodist evangelicals' publication, *Good News*, quickly warned that a campaign for ordination of homosexuals could lead to the "most divisive event since slavery split the church" before the Civil War.

In 1975 the *Texas Methodist/United Methodist Reporter* published a series of articles opposing ordination of homosexuals. Later, reporting on a survey response that was double what it had ever received, it said those responding were 95 percent opposed. United Methodist bishops declared their opposition in a meeting the same year, and several annual conferences acted similarly. The Methodist Federation for Social Action, an unofficial group, came out in support of ordaining homosexuals.

The Division of Ordained Ministry expressed the judgment that the denomination's stance in its Social Principles precluded the ordination of homosexuals.

At the 1976 General Conference delegates rejected one proposal by the Board of Church and Society that the Social Principles be altered in the direction of expressing greater acceptance of homosexuality, and another from the Women's Division of the Board of Global Ministries establishing a four-year Study Commission on Human Sexuality that would include homosexuality among its topics. Since the delegates also rejected attempts to insert into the Book of Discipline a specific ban on ordination of homosexuals, actual handling of the issue remains in the hands of local annual conferences.

Occasional local incidents indicate a reluctance to accept homosexual ministers who make a public issue of their sexual orientation, though there are indications of greater tolerance when they do not. Eugene Leggett, a minister of the Southwest Texas Conference, was suspended in 1971 after he announced his homosexuality; in 1975 the conference rejected his appeal for reinstatement. In Berryville, Va., Vic T. Brittain, separated from his wife after 12 years of marriage and three children, preached a sermon announcing his homosexuality and was removed from his three-church pastorate. "We were sorry to see him leave," said a lay leader of one church. "But you just don't want a homosexual to be your preacher."

Such attitudes may be present in other denominations, but ordination of homosexuals presents a somewhat different situation to the United Methodist Church, which guarantees an appointment to every minister, than to denominations that ordain individuals who find positions more or less on their own.

For the United Presbyterian Church (UPC), the question of ordaining homosexuals arose unavoidably in 1976, when the New York City Presbytery asked for advice from the denomination's General Assembly. The presbytery faced a decision concerning an applicant for ordination who had made known his homosexuality to presbytery officials, but whose name was not revealed publicly. The presbytery asked for "definitive guidance," reporting that it found existing church guidelines insufficient. (And, in fact, there apparently are few if any official documents of any church stating that avowed, practicing homosexuals *cannot* be ordained.)

The 1976 General Assembly approved a committee majority report stating that ordination of an avowed, practicing homosexual would be "injudicious, if not improper," but qualified this judgment with the phrase "at the present time." The assembly rejected a minority report stating more categorically that homosexuality was sinful and that homosexuals should not be ordained as pastors, elders or deacons.

The assembly also asked Moderator Thelma Adair

to appoint a task force to make a two-year study of the issue; Virginia West Davidson of Rochester, N.Y. was subsequently named to head a 19-member task force that has held hearings in various cities and prepared study packets for use in local churches. Hearings will also be held during this year's General Assembly in Philadelphia (June 21-29), but the Huntsville (Ala.) Presbytery is proposing that the assembly bring the study to an end this year and declare its (negative) position on the basis of scriptural principles.

The UPC's chief staff executive, Stated Clerk William P. Thompson—who is also president of the NCC and of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches—answered a question at the January 1976 meeting of the Presbyterians United for Biblical Concerns (PUBC) by saying: "I would not ordain a homosexual. If I were a member of a presbytery, I would vote against it. As I read the Bible, homosexuality is a sin. Mind you, I realize there may be some sinners here in this room. However, my problem is the use of the terms 'avowed' and 'practicing.'"

Some Contradictions for the Church

The task force was reportedly upset that Thompson made a public statement before its study had been completed; later, Managing Editor Mayo Y. Smith of *A.D.* (the UPC-UCC magazine) said Thompson indicated in an interview for the June issue that "his statement was made strictly for the present time, in view of the declaration of last year's assembly and in view of the continuing study of the task force." Meanwhile, the PUBC concluded a three-day consultation on homosexuality during its annual meeting, stating it opposed ordination of "avowed, practicing" homosexuals but accepted ordination of those who were "repentant, nonpracticing."

The Presbyterian Church, US (PCUS) also has had a study of homosexuality under way this past year. At its General Assembly (June 11-17) delegates will be asked to distribute a paper, "The Church and Homosexuality: A Preliminary Study," to the churches for their reactions. Though ordination is not the subject of direct consideration, it will likely be discussed as an unavoidable issue.

In the Episcopal Church the issue moved into the limelight in December 1975 when Bishop Paul Moore of New York ordained as a deacon a self-declared homosexual, Ellen Marie Barrett. In doing so Moore praised her "courage and compassion in her identification with the so-called gay community" and commented: "Jesus himself was not afraid to love anybody he felt like loving, and that included just about everybody except the Pharisees." But at that time the

question of whether women would be admitted to the priesthood absorbed everybody's attention, so her ordination as deacon got relatively little comment.

Barrett appeared to think that the homosexuality issue would likewise receive little notice when she and another woman were ordained as priests after the 1976 General Convention approved ordination of women. "Most of my opponents are so incensed about us being female that my being gay, if it comes up, will be sort of a footnote," she commented shortly before her ordination in January. Subsequent events have proven her gifts of prophecy to be limited. Already upset, losers in the General Convention battle were outraged to find that one of the very first women receiving ordination was an avowed lesbian.

Moore said that he was "amazed" by the reaction: His mail was "enormous" and mostly negative. Some upstate parishes of his diocese, more conservative than Manhattan where his cathedral and residence are located, began talking about withholding funds. Ernest Johns, minister of Christ Church, Suffern, said the parish could no longer look to Moore as "our spiritual father in God."

Bishop William C. Frey of Colorado, writing Moore when the ordination was first announced, pleaded with him not to go through with it. Frey argued that such action would not represent the "mind of the church" and would be damaging. "There are far more constructive ways to show pastoral concern for homosexuals."

Several dioceses, among them Tennessee and Georgia, expressed their opposition in annual conventions after the ordination. Texas, by a vote of 342 to 188, asked for Moore's removal. North Ohio voted down a resolution against ordination of homosexuals, and a similar resolution was tabled by Los Angeles. North Florida declared that "those who as a matter of course engage in homosexual activity" are not fit candidates for ordination, and proposed an amendment to the church's constitution to this effect.

Moore said letters criticizing him had ranged from "absolutely frantic" to "reasonably dissenting." He said, however, that other people had called his action "courageous and important." Some of those he talked with, homosexuals and people with homosexual relatives or friends, were "almost moved to tears" and saw the ordination as an act affirming God's love for homosexuals.

But across the church, storms of opposition were predominant. Presiding Bishop John M. Allin, who is decidedly less liberal than Moore, felt led to warn against excessive reaction, and assured Episcopalians that their church would not be destroyed by a single ordination.

The 1976 General Convention authorized a three-

year study of homosexuality, but in April the Executive Council requested that no more homosexuals be ordained until the 1979 convention considers the issue. Meanwhile, Malcolm Boyd, an Episcopal priest and nationally known author and speaker, has announced that he is homosexual. Such announcements could put the church in a contradictory position if it refused to ordain homosexuals but took no action against priests who waited until after ordination to declare their homosexuality.

Another contradiction may lie in divergent stands regarding homosexuals in church and in society. When the NCC adopted a resolution in March 1975 supporting civil rights for homosexuals, the wording was modified to avoid implications seen by some Governing Board members regarding ordination. But if churches criticize government or other institutions for discriminating against homosexuals, and themselves continue to discriminate in employment, they may find critics charging them with inconsistency.

Eastern Orthodox churches, who are also members of the NCC, strongly reject the idea of ordaining homosexuals, if they recognize it as a topic even to consider. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, in its biennial meeting last year in Philadelphia, made no specific reference to ordination but called homosexuality "an insult to God," "blasphemy," an "immoral and dangerous perversion" and "sinful failure." Earlier this year Greek Orthodox Bishop Soterios of Toronto was reported as commenting that Moore's ordination of a homosexual "horrified and disgusted" him; any homosexual priest discovered in his diocese, he said, would immediately be defrocked. Archbishop Torkom Manoogian of the Armenian Church of America commented that he conceivably might accept ordination of women if approved by the leadership of his church, but could not condone ordination of homosexuals.

Homosexuality and the Meaning of Ordination

Outside the NCC the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) last year adopted what was reportedly its first resolution on homosexuality. While acknowledging that SBC polity left local congregations free to ordain anyone they approved, "messengers" to the national convention urged them "not to afford the practice of homosexuality any degree of approval through ordination, employment or other designations of a normal life style."

Evangelist Billy Graham was quoted during a 1975 visit to Europe as saying ordination of homosexuals would be acceptable if they "turned away from their sins." Shortly thereafter, the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC), founded by Carl Mc-

Intire but later separated from him, complained that even some "neo-evangelicals" were saying homosexuals might be ordained. But such ordinations are clearly contrary to Scripture, the ACCC said.

In the American Lutheran Church (ALC) the standing committee for the Office of Research and Analysis has drafted a proposed statement that calls homosexuality sin but says homosexuals, like "other sinners," should be accepted into congregations. The statement does not tackle the ordination issue but says there will be "implications" for theological education and ministry.

The issue was raised publicly in the Catholic Church in January 1977 when Thomas Sweetin, a member of the Jesuit order since 1963, charged that the New York Province was refusing to approve him for ordination because he had declared his homosexuality. Officials of the province declined to comment, but a Catholic group at the Quixote Center in Mount Rainier, Md. called on the New York Jesuits to reconsider: "We urge you to set a precedent that allows the hundreds of qualified gay students in seminaries, novitiates and houses of religious formation to know that they need not live in constant fear of discovery and harassment." Among the signers was William Callahan, S.J., head of Priests for Equality, an organization supporting ordination of women.

No ruling on ordination of homosexuals has come from the Vatican, and nothing in canon law specifically prohibits it. But a Vatican document on sexual ethics issued last year reaffirmed moral condemnation of homosexual acts. Dioceses and religious orders currently take varying attitudes toward ordination candidates with homosexual orientation, reports John McNeill, S.J., an avowed homosexual and author of *The Church and the Homosexual* (1976). It is now the topic of considerable thought and study in the Catholic Church, he says, and reconsideration of traditional attitudes is under way in "most religious orders and many dioceses." McNeill also points out that celibacy is required whatever the Catholic priest's sexual orientation, a requirement that he approves.

The Synagogue Council of America, which represents all three branches of American Judaism—Orthodox, Conservative and Reform—reports that the question of ordaining homosexuals to the rabbinate has not yet been raised. Rabbi Henry Siegman, executive vice president of the council and himself Orthodox, says Orthodox Judaism would not consider homosexuality a special type of disqualification, but that ordination would be refused to any applicant openly unobservant on points of Jewish law. And the condemnation of homosexuality in the Torah is considered inescapable, he says.

In addition to the developments surveyed above, the issue of ordaining homosexuals has been the subject of various studies and conferences sponsored by agencies and regional or local units of the churches. These have provided advocates of homosexual ordination opportunities for presenting their case in forums that have not previously been open. One argument presented is that with the emergence of homosexuals into the open, there is a need for ministries that homosexual clergy are especially qualified to offer.

Another area of significant change has been the seminaries. Nancy Krody, who heads the UCC gay caucus, says that she was asked to leave seminary when she revealed her homosexuality in 1965. Today students in some seminaries openly form gay caucuses, though even liberal seminaries are nervous about any publicity that could alienate sources of support. So the churches can expect to find themselves increasingly confronted with the ordination issue in the years ahead.

At the same time, however, the churches affect the seminaries, particularly those that are denominationally controlled. "When the church has marked off a life style as problematic, a seminary of the church has to take that judgment seriously," says Dean J. Philip Wogaman of the United Methodist Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

The admissions question is currently very touchy among United Methodist seminaries; some reports indicate that the "ordainability" factor is increasingly cited to support a restrictive policy. Wogaman says Wesley's policy is to consider homosexual applicants on an individual basis, and that the first known homosexual admitted to the M. Div. program, customary for those preparing for ordination, graduated this year. (Last summer the faculty stated that homosexuality "may be" a factor in denying admission to the M. Div.)

Wogaman says another declared homosexual, Charles Butler, was denied admission to the M. Div. program last year because of the way his homosexuality was expressed rather than for the homosexuality itself. Butler was offered admission to the Master of Theological Studies program (for students not seeking ordination), but he rejected that option, stating that he planned to be ordained in the Metropolitan Community Church.

Whatever the various responses of the churches, emergence of the ordination issue has undoubtedly led them to give the subject of homosexuality far more serious thought than they have in the past. Strangely, it apparently has not led them to give new thought to the meaning of ordination. □

Homosexual Counseling As a Learning Ministry

Peggy Way

The following article is adapted from a letter prepared for the United Church of Christ staff working on a "Preliminary Study on Human Sexuality." This study is being done by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries at the request of the Executive Council for presentation to the 11th General Synod of the United Church, to be held July 1-5 in Washington, D.C.

Peggy Way, who has taught and worked as a pastoral counselor in Chicago for a number of years, will join the faculty of the Vanderbilt School of Divinity in Nashville in September. She will be teaching pastoral theology.

DEAR SUSAN:

We have agreed that I will write to you some reflections rising out of my ministries with persons within the church who are gay. I have decided to use the form of a personal letter, both because the form is much more congruent with my own style and because, in my view, communication about human sexuality does not lend itself well to formal abstracts or scientific expositions.

Beginning with ministry seen as problematic, I will pass through some necessary autobiography, offer some theological reflections, and return again to ministry. I will share with you as though over morning tea—and would that it could be like that!

How does one start? When I meet with a group to discuss church policies toward homosexuality, I often begin by asking its members to imagine situations that church people (clergy and laity, parishes and judicatories) may expect to confront in relation to this issue. Usually we end up with a list like this:

- Parents have learned that their son or daughter is gay; they ask advice.

- A course on sexuality is to be taught in the junior high school. What is to be said about homosexuality?

- A gay group requests the use of a church facility for its meetings.

- A youth minister reveals his/her homosexual orientation to the pastor or supervisor.

- A young person reports a homosexual experience to pastor/parent/counselor, and fears that he or she is gay.

- A mother worries about her little boy's interest in

dolls, or a father about his son's lack of interest in sports.

- Members of a teen-age group use terms like "queer," "fag," "fairy," etc.; a girl in the group seems "too masculine," or a boy "too feminine."

- A same-sex couple asks the pastor about a wedding service, or a service of commitment, or about couple counseling, or about sexual dysfunctions in their relationship.

- A heterosexual couple asks counsel because one partner is bisexual, or is developing a decided homosexual preference.

- One pastor goes to another for advice about "coming out" as a homosexual.

- A lay leader asks the church to withhold its money from the area seminary because it has an open gay caucus.

- The pastor is asked directly what he/she thinks about homosexuality . . . how the denomination justifies its position . . . what the Bible actually says.

- A youth's best friend reveals that he/she is gay, and the youth is frightened, shares this knowledge with the pastor . . . another young person reveals a locker-room experience.

- Rumors or suspicions about a same-sex couple in the church come to the attention of the pastor.

Why do I begin with these? One reason is that in my experience almost everyone has some knowledge of a situation or situations like one of those listed. Second, given the opportunity, most persons will be able to discuss these situations with concern for complexity and feeling. In other words, the question is in part a group leader's technique.

Biography Is Central

More important, the question places the discussion within a context. That context is simply the ministerial imperative: *We have no choice but to prepare ourselves to work with all people and all possible situations, regardless of our positions on them.* Indeed, we must be prepared, as we work with them, to have our a priori positions challenged.

The next step is always personal. In pastoral practice there is no way of dealing effectively with this issue that does not begin with autobiography: how I became involved with it, why I remained involved, what it means and what it has cost. If people are to hear you on this issue, they must know from whence you speak and how you got there.

My own story is not dramatic. Once upon a time, back in the early 60's before "Negroes" became "blacks" and when I was working with Don Benedict and the Chicago City Missionary Society, there was an attempt to establish dialogue between the church and the homophile community. No one else being interested in the venture, I was assigned to the weekend retreat, to which I brought my husband and two small children.

In one sense not much came of the retreat; as far as I can remember, the group met only once again. (The middle 60's arrived, and we turned to issues like civil rights, housing, and the war.) Before the retreat, however, I had never met an avowed homosexual and had never reflected much on human sexuality; from that time on, I've never stopped. And I kept in touch with some of the persons we met there. Joe and Bert, one of the male couples at the retreat, are still our friends, and when I joined the faculty of the Urban Training Center I worked with them on some of the first clergy/gay dialogues as part of urban training. Later while on the faculty of the University of Chicago Divinity School I placed a student with Mattachine Midwest for field education, and the success of this brought an invitation to join the board, where I served six years.

Over the past six years of practice as a pastoral counselor I have become known as a counselor gays could come to; in that period I have worked with perhaps 80 gay persons. It is important to add that I have known most of them in other settings than the once-a-week-in-an-office style: as students, colleagues, friends, through Mattachine meetings or through the women's movement.

All this led to further study and readings on homosexuality, viewed psychologically, sociologically, theologically. (Interestingly, I often found that my own experiences did not match the literature.) About this time I was asked to be an advocate for a lesbian at the Lutheran School of Theology; I accepted. As a member of the faculty at the Jesuit School of Theology in Chicago I was asked to teach a course in "Moral Perspectives on Homosexuality," first as a co-teacher, then alone. And, not surprisingly, I found myself lecturing on the subject, wherever possible with a gay colleague.

So much for objective aspects; what counts more is what it all meant, including the problems and

inner searching it has occasioned.

One example: For some time I was puzzled about the communication of my own sexuality. At first it seemed condescending or self-protective to proclaim my own "straightness"—especially when I disliked the terms "gay" and "straight" anyway! Yet *not* to mention it, I found, was a distraction from the topic; if I didn't deal with the matter, people speculated about it. Also, in several instances gay people who had heard me speak assumed I, too, was gay, and confided in me in ways they might not have otherwise. Finally it became my practice to declare myself early on.

The point may seem minor, but it has ramifications. Many "straights," for instance, are reluctant to speak their minds on the issue because they fear being identified as gay; that feeling could itself be a learning experience, if reflected on. As it happens, it doesn't trouble me; I felt complimented when a gay woman made the wrong assumption after hearing me speak, for it meant that I had heard correctly and was speaking truly.

At one time, however, I did have qualms about becoming so identified with the "gay issue" that it might lessen my effectiveness on other issues. It was difficult for me to support a woman friend's struggle to re-enter the Lutheran seminary. I had no doubts of her integrity or her competence, or about whether a gay person could be called-of-God; but selfishly I worried whether my already "radical" image could tolerate anything more. I mention this because other straight people may have similar qualms. It is "all right" to be for blacks, women, Hispanics, Third World countries; I fear that being for gay rights is different, and this has to be faced.

Acceptance of Self

And the problem goes deeper. To talk of *others'* sexuality, I have found, demands an order of awareness and acceptance of one's own sexuality too seldom developed in any of us. In a permissive culture a burden is sometimes (often) placed upon the person who is *not* sexually active or whose beliefs and practices are thought of as "conservative." Thus I have gone through the pilgrimage of claiming my own sexual preferences as OK.

Moving through the diversity of gay culture, living in the midst of the "sexual revolution," I was confronted with questions like these:

—Ideologically, must not a liberated woman *only* love other women?

—What is *wrong* with a person who does not *want* premarital intercourse?

—Why *shouldn't* married couples agree that each partner is free for meaningful sexual relationships

with other persons, of either sex?

Occasionally I have felt terribly old-fashioned to be heterosexual, monogamous and basically not experimental in the positions of intercourse! More reflectively, I have concluded that to move in this area one must have one's own autobiography within emotional reach, and anchored somewhere intellectually/theologically. Only then can one "hear" the "other" and speak with integrity.

It's pertinent at this point to mention the concern I once felt about working with lesbians. Most of my early ministries in the gay communities had been with men; would I, as a "straight" person, be as receptive, warm and loving among homosexual *women* as I could be with men? I'm glad to say that the uncertainty didn't last longer than my first therapy experience and first friendship experience with lesbians; still, this self-questioning is another dynamic factor that must be considered.

Related to this is another finding: To generalize a bit wildly from my own experience, I find that *almost without exception* women-in-ministry (ordained or lay) are more open to discussions of homosexuality, and to ministry to and by homosexuals, than are men. One probable reason is that women are less focused on the orgasm as the totality of sexuality, more receptive to loving expressions of same-sex affection, and therefore less likely, when homosexuality is mentioned, to be threatened immediately or intensely by imagery of genital sexual experience.

Another possible reason is that many males have had a scary, threatening, repulsive experience (their descriptions) with homosexual seduction in youth. Whatever the source, the gender difference appears across denominational and faith boundaries (among Roman Catholic priests and nuns, for example, as within the United Methodist Church). The practical significance of this emerges when one considers that most middle judicatory leadership positions are male.

Meeting the Children

But what of the children? That was a source of another mild crisis in my own pilgrimage when I transferred my counseling practice to my home, so that I had a continual succession of homosexual persons having coffee with me, *meeting my children*, etc. At the risk of perpetuating stereotypes, I will add that some of the male homosexuals who came were at a stage of affirming their homosexuality and wanting it blatant, so that they looked and dressed like what my children at school were hearing described as "queers," "fairies," "queens." And out of this, too, came insights:

First I found I had to deal directly with my feelings

about children's sexuality. I confess I was horrified when I discovered that no concern ever surfaced in my own head with respect to my daughter, but that I went through several weeks' probing when I worked with my first male homosexual who "preferred" young boys. Finally I worked out my anguish directly with him—and Jack has become, over five years, a close family friend. The gain for me was in my awareness of the power of such feelings.

One of the hardest things for me was the anger I felt because of the language my children picked up in school ("fag," etc.) and because they did not instantly change in deference to their mother's ministry. I had to learn that I couldn't program my children on the issue, especially considering peer group pressures and their own issues of sexual identity.

As I relaxed more, I found to my joy that the children almost intuitively accepted and came to care about those gay persons who were multi-dimensional, warm, loving, etc. (the vast majority), but stepped back from the "aggressive" ones, probably as much from their own inability to process the driven energy as from the gay identification. All this is of very great importance. I am convinced that *the church cannot move on this issue unless it is able to deal with the feelings and fears straight people have about their children in relation to gays*. More on this later.

During all this time, my own dignity as a straight person was never violated; and for my own part I felt that I met and dealt not just with gays but with persons. This was true in all my ministries in the various gay communities, church-related or not: the bar scene and those in the closet, the sado-masochist groupings and the bisexual clusters, the radicals/lebens and the professionals about to retire without ever having revealed their sexual orientation. At the same time there are other psychodynamic elements I experienced that should be mentioned, because until recognized and dealt with they get in the way of straight/gay collegiality.

One of them had to do with me: I found I had to deal with my own fantasies about how gay people "do it." Many straight people suffer from this and thus begin relating to the issue with narrow and corrosive imagery. In my ministry with straights, then, I have sometimes found it helpful to deal directly with their questions and their repugnance.

At the same time I found myself offended, and am sometimes offended still, at the centrality of orgasmic genital sexuality within portions of the gay community, especially among males. I think my gay friends and colleagues will affirm that I have never let this get in the way of creative listening or let it affect my concern for persons. But I have also not restrained myself from a critique of this focus. Is orgasmic

genital sexuality really such a prime value? What meaning does it have? (Freedom—but how much?) I have learned that many gay persons share this concern with me, and that helps move us to another level of discourse: How important is genital sexuality in all of human experience? However, my point is that this dimension of part of gay culture exists, and we who affirm the dignity and personhood of gays should not pretend that it doesn't.

Personal and Emotional

Allow me now some few further generalizations, born of my experience, that I believe will be particularly useful to your task force.

First, my growth in ministry with gay persons has been very largely derived from the “dimensionality” of my relationships with them, from knowing them in contexts where sexuality was but one dimension, never being “therapist” to “sick client” or outside judge of specific behavior. If my insight into the human situation has deepened through this ministry, it is because in the very process of focusing on problems relating to sexuality I have learned again and again that sexuality is an important aspect, but only one aspect, of life. This insight will reappear when I speak in more theological terms.

Second, for me it has not been through scientific knowledge, statistical data and intellectualizing that I have gained most in this pilgrimage. The intellectual data I have found helpful derive from the knowledge we have of homosexuality in other cultures, present and past, a knowledge that forces consideration of the origins of homosexuality beyond facile cultural self-evidents into consideration of basic issues. Primarily, however, progress has come through real relationships, in which gay persons and I have shared our mutual gifts and were open to discuss our sometimes differing views.

Third, in dealing with this issue we ignore or minimize its emotional dimension only at our own risk. As one example: In dealing with straights I find it less than helpful to make an early reference to “homophobia,” or to hint in any way that if they cannot accept homosexuals there must be something wrong with *them*. This leads only to backlash. Homophobia exists, of course; it will not be removed by being denounced. Another aspect of this is that the generally negative denominational votes against acceptance of gays derive in part from an accumulative anger at what is seen as a progressive, ceaseless erosion of “majority” values. Here is a last resort; if one cannot easily be against blacks, women, the Third World, one can still, goddam it, be against gays!

To me this has meant that I must carefully differentiate between a ministry of *justice* and a ministry of *caring*. When I met with the United Church of Christ nominating committee on behalf of the gay caucus, I was engaged in a justice ministry and concerned therefore with the *rights* of persons and the *principles* of church life. When I meet with congregational groups I am usually about a caring ministry, concerned to open discussion, to ventilate feelings, to *listen*, and most especially to discern where there have been hurts, fears and misunderstandings in relation to this issue.

So much for my pilgrimage. Before we turn again to ministry—how can we prepare to confront that list of pastoral problems?—I will insert a brief word of theological reflection. And again I begin with a question. It is not strange that the organizing principles of the church, especially the principles that determine inclusion and exclusion, should be focused on issues of sexuality? In the Roman Catholic church, only men can be ordained, only celibates can remain priests, only heterosexuals can be fully accepted into the fold. The Protestant tradition is just now letting go of gender as a principle of exclusion, and it still keeps sexual orientation.

Theology: Who Can Belong?

Bluntly put, this means that in the Roman Catholic tradition God calls only people with a penis. In my own church it means that, given education, competence, commitment, experience, skill, etc., the sole category on which one may be excluded has to do with the way one has an orgasm. Is that what we want? If principles of inclusion/exclusion can be read as valuations, do we really want sexual orientation as the only criterion that excludes?

When the question is put in this way it is my experience that most people, seeing that a principle of exclusion necessarily suggests what is most central, find a distortion. And they see irony as well. On the one hand, much of contemporary culture urges the church to recognize the importance of sexuality—when the church is organized around it! On the other, the church calls people to care and justice, to concern themselves with freedom, poverty, peace—but the church reserves its *sanctions* for sexual practices and fails to define normative expectations with respect to the rest of human living and doing.

Beginning here, I come out with a somewhat strange position. By organizing itself around sexuality, the church simultaneously makes genital sexuality more significant than it is and fails to communicate its key message about the human place in the universe. In my understanding the key religious insight is that

"I am not God," and the key Christian insight is a way of living out of that perspective. Within that perspective, roles controlling the expression of sexuality are not primary or central. These expressions take their place as one of many kinds of human expression, some beautiful, some evil, some self-centered, some other- or relationally-centered.

Trying to evaluate these expressions, I sort through them with the people involved, within their and my belief systems. In doing so I find it impossible to define a homosexual act per se as evil, or a heterosexual act per se good. Yet this is not wholly a situational/contextual ethical position. I affirm the centrality of intention, dimension, the embodiment of care and justice as moral priorities. Does one *intend* an honest religious pilgrimage? Is the expression of genital sexuality the center or only a dimension of this pilgrimage? Does one embody care toward others, seeking the self-understanding that makes this possible? Does one live justly, and not only in rhetoric? I find this a high ethic, and I find that one's sexual orientation of itself has little to do with the quality of one's observance.

This hardly means that theology must be silent about sex. In my advocacy of gay rights, for instance, or for that matter in relation to the women's movement, I have never been without a critical perspective. I consider "Gay Is Good" an inadequate slogan, however understandable psychologically and politically. It is ironic to me that sectors of the gay community commit the same blunder as the church by centering so much of the meaning of human existence on the issue of free sexual expression. And yet, I hasten to add, this is not solely a phenomenon of the gay community. Our culture insistently sends the message: If you are not sexually active and experimental, you are not free!

This message victimizes gays and straights alike, and between their own little lists of "don'ts" and their affirmations of the joys of sex the churches are of little help. The really tricky points are in between, and we have four resources in the way of either psychological or moral guidelines to help people make decisions, or to place their sexuality in a broad context that includes developmental processes, constitutional "givens," socio-cultural pressures and valuations, the tremendous power of sexuality and the considerations of a faith community. I find tremendous interest in this issue among gay persons who also affirm a Christian commitment. Here, then, is an agenda in which both gay and straight have a stake. In working through it we will discover the mutuality of many concerns.

From this brief excursion you will see that my theologizing about this issue does more to define the

task of ministry than it does to solve its problems. I think you will also see that neither I nor anyone will be able to furnish an all-purpose manual answering every pastoral dilemma. On the one hand, both gays and straights have taught me more than I can possibly communicate; on the other, there is much to be learned by everyone, much that cannot be put down because it is not known.

Ministry to Straights

Let me deal first with ministries to straights, by suggesting the tone and direction of the answers I give to the five most "popular" questions I get. My basic assumption about this area is that people do not know as much as we may expect; my basic approach is to try to establish an atmosphere in which they can ask their *real* questions. Such as:

(1) *How do they get that way?* I take the etiological question with full seriousness, and summarize the prevailing positions:

(a) The prevalent psychological view continues to be that of "arrested development," i.e., a fixation in the normal developmental processing, leaving the person at the latency stage of same-sex identification (Sullivan) or in a powerful unresolved oedipal stage with fears of opposite-sex genital involvement. There are many variations on this, including the popular weak-father/strong-mother genesis. We might note that all etiologies are notoriously lacking in attention paid to female homosexuality.

(b) A growing viewpoint sees sexuality as learned behavior; the individual therefore learns to be homosexual. Perhaps his or her first sexual experiences are with the same sex, and there may be meaningful sub-cultural learnings. The sociology of homosexuality is a relatively new field.

(c) Some few theorists posit theories of hormonal imbalance and would seek to "treat" with hormone injections.

(d) Some writers who do not take seriously a homosexual-heterosexual continuum for all humans assume the capacity for "change" and see "failure" to change as rooted in moral incapacity, intransigence, etc. This position may be related to (a) above.

(e) An emergent position does not seek to place causation. This interpretation rises as gay persons share their memories of always having felt "different" within a heterosexual culture but of trying to refuse recognition of that truth in their own lives. Such an approach emphasizes that there just "are" (and always have been) homosexual persons, "in the nature of things," so to speak.

(f) My own preference is for a multi-dimensional point of view related to the unique developmental

pilgrimage of each homosexual person, with being homosexual an identity occurring at the matrix of social-psychological experiencing.

Generally this exposition stimulates good discussion and reveals our limited knowledge of the etiology of anything. I ask reflection on the experience many gays have of always having been gay, and on the question: How do people become heterosexual? And I use the occasion to present some material about homosexuality in other cultures different from ours, in which American-style "momism" plays no role.

(2) *What does the Bible say?* First, I grant the seven or so verses to which questioners will refer, and I acknowledge that nowhere in the Bible will one find an imperative toward homosexuality! That done, one can go a number of ways, depending on the group's preparedness. With some it is useful to share contemporary biblical scholarship, or to highlight other biblical passages that focus on love. Here, as on other issues, we are dealing with the hermeneutical question: How do we select our informing biblical principles? Much depends on the understanding people have of the role and use of the Bible. Often it seems that people can accept changing principles of interpretation, *even* about women and blacks but *not* about gays!

(3) *The life style question: Why do they act that way? Why do they have to let us know they are gay? Why can't they control their sexuality as we have to learn how to do? What are gay bars?* It is because of this cluster of questions that I always work hard to have a known gay person as co-speaker—but this isn't always possible. I try also to recognize that they are, by and large, honest questions; most straight people *really* don't know much about gay persons or gay culture. In responding, then, I draw on the wealth of rich, loving experiences I have had, bringing the questioners with me through my own learning process.

(4) *The moral issue: But do you condone homosexuality? Won't it undermine the family?* Something of my response to such questions has already been indicated. My position is stated at three levels:

First, I am concerned that we do not bring hurt upon persons because of their sexual orientation. Regardless of one's final position, the pastoral imperative applies: We are to be present with, bring grace to, not throw stones at other persons of whatever category. My minimal goal in seminary teaching is that no one involved will ever again treat a gay person as "evil" by definition, as a "thing" defined solely by his/her sexuality.

Second, I argue for justice; regardless of one's theology on sexuality, gay persons as persons deserve the support of straight persons for their full legal and civil rights, access to jobs, housing, etc.

Third, I personally affirm the possibility of all persons, gay and straight, living a life of care and justice in the world God created. Either straight or gay can live a (or *the*) Christian way according to these categories. Usually I invite discussion on these themes. What expectations for morality do we have other than sexual? Why are we more sensitive to "unnatural" sex than we are to rapacious "normal" sex? How much does homosexuality have to do with our high divorce rate and our other family problems? Why are social oppression and political deception less repugnant to us than homosexuality? Often I find that beginning with the issue of homosexuality can lead a congregation (conservatives, liberals, radicals) into some fine theologizing that will touch such profound issues as the relation between law and grace, the very nature of truth.

(5) *How would you feel if your own children were gay?* The question is always there, and the answer must be direct. People must know that it has been a real question for me, even that my feelings about my son were different from my feelings about my daughter (I didn't get that clump of lead in the pit of my stomach when I imaged it with *her*).

Starting here I can trace the growth of the position I now hold: I cannot fully shape how my children turn out. No parent can. My vision is that they grow up both strong and tender, and that we can become adults together. I will hope not to hold on to them as little children; I hope they are freed from any need to find their own identities in negative reaction to their parents. Several years ago my husband and I found ourselves free to say that some parents may be called to relate to their children—adults as persons who are gay. I trust our feelings will intersect with this position should it occur in our family.

For the final goal of parenting is an adult-to-adult relationship. I feel terrible sadness and pathos over the beautiful "children" many parents are missing because sexuality gets in the way. All the rich humanness, spirituality, commitment, kindness I get to enjoy and share is lost to parents who cannot deal with the homosexuality of their own children, regardless of their other fine qualities.

Ministry to Gays

If ministry with straights is best dealt with in terms of the questions they have about gays, a ministry with gays will be defined most readily in terms of struggle; this not because gays necessarily have greater problems but because their real-life conflicts, like those of any minority largely closed off from the larger culture, are so little known or are known with

so little empathy. I will mention six areas of struggle that have surfaced most often in my sharing with gay persons.

Parents and family. Most young people have family- and parent-relating problems; gays have more. It is rare to find a gay person with *spontaneous* family relationships, who does not have to program all family contacts, prepare psychologically for visits, deal with what it means to have a partner (if the gay person is in a committed relationship) who is not welcome in the family home. Frequently the partner is viewed as "evil influence" or "seducer" and the relationship as "sick" and "transitory," *no matter how long it lasts, regardless of what the partner and the relationship are really like.* The dynamic here appears to be an inability to envision one's "child" engaged in adult sexuality with a same-sex partner.

Holidays are particularly difficult times for gay persons in relationship; either they celebrate together in the midst of ponderous silence from their childhood homes; or they visit their families separately; or if they visit one family together, they experience surface courtesy underlaid by deep constraint. Periods of serious illness are also difficult. Not only families

but hospitals frequently exclude the partner, the deeply loved one, whether by default or intention, whether in ignorance or with knowledge.

Straight persons rarely are able to see the gay couple as a family, with a home, friends, a conjoint life pattern. Like single persons, they are often asked about going "home"—as if one did not have a home unless married with children! If they have not shared their orientation, they must often deal with questions from well-meaning family members about dating, getting married, etc.

I have worked often with gay persons over the decision to tell their families. The process is not always destructive, but it has *always* been difficult. Over the years, we seem to find increasing acceptance among siblings. Usually, but not always, the greatest difficulty arises with parents of the same sex.

The issue of fidelity. Consider: Gay persons who value committed relationships, whether covenant or marriage, have no public arena in which (to use the old-fashioned phrase) to pledge their troth. This suggests the larger truth that gay persons lack structural supports for fidelity, and processes for establishing/terminating a relationship. Relatedly, much of gay culture (particularly among men and in

—For Further Reading—

These sources are selected from an extensive literature on homosexuality; I will be happy to share further resources in personal correspondence. I recommend obtaining *A Gay Bibliography*, edited by Barbara Gittings and annually produced by the Task Force on Gay Liberation through the American Library Association (American Library Association, Box 2383, Philadelphia, PA 19103). I can also put serious students in touch with an extensive bibliography on homosexuality and Christianity developed by a theologian who is himself gay. P.W.

BASIC RESOURCES

McCaffrey, Joseph, ed., *The Homosexual Dialectic* (Prentice-Hall, 1972).

McNeill, John J., *The Church and the Homosexual* (Sheed, Andrews and McMeel, 1976). A complex, carefully reasoned argument, rich in resources and preeminently a work of theology.

Tripp, C. A., *The Homosexual Matrix* (McGraw-Hill, 1975).

Weinberg, George, *Society and the Healthy Homosexual* (Doubleday, 1972). One of the first serious works to affirm the possibility of joining "healthy" and "homosexual"; places the issue in a broader societal and cultural context.

Weinberg, Martin S. and Williams, Colin J., *Male Homosexuals: Their Problems and Adaptations* (Penguin, 1974).

Weltge, Ralph, ed., *The Same Sex: An Appraisal of Homosexuality* (Pilgrim Press, 1969).

A smorgasbord of differing viewpoints. See especially Shinn, Secor, Weltge.

THE GAY EXPERIENCE

Clarke, Lige and Nichols, Jack, *I Have More Fun with You Than Anybody* (St. Martin's Press, 1972).

Fisher, Peter, *The Gay Mystique: The Myth and Reality of Male Homosexuality* (Stein and Day, 1972).

Gearhart, Sally and Johnson, William R., eds., *Loving Women/ Loving Men: Gay Liberation and the Church* (Glide Publications, 1974). See especially Kuhn, Gearhart, Johnson.

Klaich, Dolores, *Woman Plus Woman: Attitudes Toward Lesbianism* (William Morrow, 1974).

Martin, Del and Lyon, Phyllis, *Lesbian/ Woman* (Bantam, 1972).

CHURCH-RELATED

Bailey, D.S., *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition* (Shoestring Press, Hamden, Conn., 1975).

Oberholzer, W. Dwight, ed., *Is Gay Good? Ethics, Theology and Homosexuality* (Westminster, 1971). See especially Nouwen, Harvey, Henry, Hones, Von Rohr.

Pittenger, Norman, *Time for Consent? A Christian's Approach to Homosexuality* (SCM Press Ltd., London, 1967).

urban areas) focuses around the bars, drinking, the stimulation of genital sexuality. One cause, of course, is the forced exclusion of gays from the broader culture, and their felt need for places where one need not pretend. Obviously, this creates an atmosphere not supportive of fidelity.

There is an ideological dimension as well. Just as among straights, there are differing assessments of permissible sexual activity in different segments of gay culture. In some circles monogamy and committed relationships are seen as heterosexual carry-overs; the sexual experience is viewed as a good meal without being situated in a sacramental context.

The consequence of all this is that gay persons concerned about fidelity, about relating genital expression to life commitment, frequently find no support—either from the gay community or from the straight community which views homosexual activity itself as immoral. And the church, in its concern for morality, turns away from these moral hungers and concerns!

There is also the issue of fidelity to oneself. Sometimes gay persons find themselves moving exclusively within the gay culture, operating professionally out of their gay identity (I wince whenever I ask a gay person to be my colleague at a church meeting), sometimes being criticized by other gay persons for doing something not properly “gay”! In short, there is pressure on gay persons toward making their sexual orientation the center of their being, and I suggest that this raises the issue of fidelity to the multi-dimensionality of one’s self.

Issues of Identity/Integrity/Dignity

Most gay persons have grown up surrounded by negative psychological pressures, imbued with a consciousness of not “fitting.” The gay movement has been a magnificent help for developing a positive sense of identity, but the corrosive effects on identity linger on in individuals. And the negative messages continue, creating a schizophrenic style of existence in which one must play different roles in different settings, a necessity that levies a heavy toll against the formation of secure identity. To me it is little wonder that I find depression occurring with some regularity in many gay persons, including liberation leaders and other strong and otherwise “healthy” personalities. Finally there is the psychic effect of the phenomenon already mentioned, that gay persons are so often viewed (and sometimes view themselves) primarily in sexual categories.

A footnote: I find that most straight persons cannot understand this. “They” would save themselves a lot of trouble if they would just be like the

rest of us; after all, they’ve chosen it, haven’t they? To me this reveals a basic lack of understanding about the feeling of homosexuality and about its place on the sexual continuum.

Opening the closet door. The coming out process touches on most areas of life: family, friends, vocation, career. It entails dealing with ambivalent feelings, social pressures, analysis of the cost of doing it or not doing it, programming how to begin, what to say to whom. I will trust your imagination to reckon the pain and the sheer expenditure of psychic energy involved. If gay persons are often drained, it is because they often need to focus on their own survival.

Sexual functions. Gays experience exactly the same problems of sexual dysfunction as do heterosexuals: frigidity, impotence, etc. I mention this because of the almost total absence of resources in this area (though I was delighted to learn that Masters and Johnson work with gay couples). I don’t believe pastors should be sexual dysfunction therapists, but they should be prepared to discuss such matters with comfort and to make referrals when appropriate and possible.

Loneliness. Many gay persons experience a hunger to be part of a relationship—amazingly like straight persons!—and many have a fantasy of finding the perfect partner—again, a mark of identity among us! But in much of gay culture there are special obstacles. Often, among gay men, the genital sexual experience precedes any other intimacy. The experience of courtship, growing together over time, participation in little human events that breed friendship and continuity—these are not normative. I have found profound sadness lurking at a deep level among a good number of gay men, especially those who spend much time in the gay bar culture. It is a sadness untouched though sometimes masked by genital activity, a sadness seeking after simple companionship.

There is also the profound loneliness of the gay person who is not happy to be gay but has claimed it as his/her way of being; the pathetic loneliness of what I can only crassly refer to as the “aging queen”; the devastation wrought on those who expected that coming out would solve all their problems but discovered that gay culture is probably as insensitive to gays as straight culture is toward straights . . . and so on.

Keeping Perspective

Susan, you must be tired. So am I; I am in fact fatigued with the whole issue—would that we were past the time of solemn studies by denominational task forces! But I try to keep my sense of humor,

as I watch the Presbyterians and the UCCs and the Catholics and the Methodists carry on their sober pondering of issues that Jesus, in a simpler culture, might have dealt with more directly: Welcome, brother! Welcome, sister! Follow me . . .

And I try also to keep perspective. It's *not* a simple culture; and if gay pride is not easy to achieve in our time, neither is it easy for straights to arrive at understanding, sympathy, acceptance. So it is complicated. At the same time that I feel I am sending you too much, I am conscious also of all I have left out. And I haven't told you what-is-to-be-done, even about ministry.

Well, we do have to study. Separately I'm sending you a little list of resources, culled from a vast literature. Some brief remarks: There is a growing body of excellent material reflecting the moral perspectives of the Roman Catholic Church while setting forth serious alternatives to the official stance. Cultural anthropology is helpful for its reminders that homosexuality exists in other contexts besides ours. It is irresponsible for any church-related group studying the issue not to be familiar with Kinsey, Ellis, Masters and Johnson, etc. And, of course, one should read selectively works by psychiatrists and psychoanalysts, as well as the writings of gay persons.

Not only selectively, but *critically*. For instance, not all gay writers speak for all other gays. As for the medical literature, a pastor active in this

ministry may soon find himself or herself working with as many gay persons as most psychiatrists encounter, and in a much richer context of multi-dimensional relationships. I personally don't believe we know nearly as much about human sexuality as the abundance of literature suggests! We should not start out with the thought that "the answers" are somewhere out there; we should respect our own efforts to find them.

And we have to struggle in our hearts as in our minds. From all I have said, I think you will see why I insisted at the beginning on the importance of our own biographies. Not everyone will have the opportunities for reflection and enrichment that are given to a pastoral counselor. But if pastors and task-force members will take their own ministries seriously, if they know they are starting on a pilgrimage when they engage this issue, they will find themselves moving into deeper understanding of themselves as well as others.

I hope that meantime gays won't give up on us. (Sometimes, as a woman, I've had to struggle not to give up on men!) Gay or straight, male or female, Christian or not, there aren't many guarantees that go with living. To be human means to be sometimes lonely and to experience our vulnerability. Coming to know the vulnerabilities of others can fortify us for the struggle with our own frail contingency.

Warmly,
PEGGY



WOMAN, LESBIAN, FEMINIST, CHRISTIAN

Nancy E. Krody

I AM A COMPLEX PERSON, as is every human being. Some of us integrate the contradictions of our lives better than others do; and some contradictions are tolerated in society, while others are judged insane. The contradictions in my life are that I am a woman, a lesbian, a feminist and a Christian. It is a complicated mixture; I struggle with it daily.

There are closet lesbians in the church and closet Christians in the lesbian-feminist movement, but very

few open lesbians in the church. Some of us are unable or unwilling to remain in either "closet," and have opted for a "gay church," such as the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), which consciously ministers to and with the gay community; we have found this a place where we can be whole people and not hide either our sexual orientation or our faith. But as I write, I personally know of fewer than 10 open lesbians in mainline Christian denominations. Where are the millions of other Christian lesbians? They have followed one of three patterns: They are still in the church, but closeted; they have left their mainline denomination for the Metropolitan Community Church or related movements; they have left

NANCY E. KRODY is Editorial Assistant of "The Journal of Ecumenical Studies" and Coordinator of the United Church of Christ Gay Caucus. This article is adapted from a longer statement appearing in the April-June issue of "Foundations." Copyright © 1977 by "Foundations."

the institutional church entirely. Let us look at each of these options.

The great majority of women who define themselves as lesbians do so only in the limited context of close friends, family or lovers—seldom in the context of neighbors, co-workers, or such authority figures as police, clergy, educators, bankers and government officials. To be “closeted,” therefore, does not mean that a woman’s orientation is known only to herself, but that she has revealed it selectively, each revelation depending on the reactions of those to whom she has opened herself previously. The most traumatic experience is often that of telling families, especially parents. In fact, a very useful kind of church counseling would be help to the families of gays as they go through this experience together.

Civil liberties legislation is one important need of closeted gay people. Nearly 40 cities have already amended civil rights legislation of the 1960’s to protect gay people from discrimination in housing, employment, education and public accommodations. Given the economic position of women in the United States, and given that a lesbian by definition is not dependent on a man for the necessities of her life, her need for a secure job is of great importance.

But even with protective legislation, few lesbians are willing to announce their orientation to employers and colleagues. Jobs are hard to come by, and legal remedies are cumbersome and prolonged; the paycheck cannot be risked. Similarly, few want to face eviction from an apartment or rejection for mortgage credit from a homophobic realtor or banker. Simple prudence dictates that a lesbian keep her affectional preference to herself in the commercial world.

And in other worlds as well. Enough of us have been kicked out of colleges, universities and professional schools in the past two decades that our sisters will think twice before being open on campus or before listing gay organizational affiliations on applications to college or graduate school. In 1965, because I revealed my lesbianism, I was prevented from completing my seminary education. A United Presbyterian sister met the same fate in 1976, though the climate has changed enough in the past decade that she was able to transfer to another school.

The Church as Nonsupportive Community

What of the church? A cursory look at almost any Christian education curriculum, local church program or denominational budget will show that time, money, resources and energy are expended almost entirely on families rather than on “unattached” persons. Little attention is paid to the elderly, who often live alone with their memories or are consigned

to an “old folks’ home” where creeping senility is the rule and sexuality is viewed with distaste. Little attention is paid to the never-married, once they pass the “young adult” state. In more than one field work church I found that the youth fellowship came equipped with no-longer-young-adult tagalongs whose only fulfillment came from hanging around the kids in memory of those old happy times in their lives. These people do the unsung jobs around the congregation, but we seldom plan specifically for their needs, except as we attempt to find suitable mates for them in the “safety” of the church.

Woe to the lesbian who finds her “mate” in the church and wants to express her love as openly as her heterosexual friends express theirs. Suddenly she is an outcast and must be removed immediately from any responsible position; certainly she must not teach children or drive the youth to a skating party or sit on a church board. Instead she must keep her affectional preference wholly separate from her church life, only rarely sharing those experiences with her lover or, if both are in the same congregation, being absolutely circumspect when in others’ presence.

The psychological toll this takes and the pain it introduces into a relationship are heartbreaking, especially when church spokespersons continue to preach about loving, caring, sharing, about personal wholeness and integrity. Worse than heartbreaking, because it engenders self-hatred, which is the experience of the gay person who listens year after year to homophobic utterances from the pulpit or church school class or from the governing body of his/her denomination.

A young woman who has perceived her lesbianism and is exploring what it means for her will be reluctant to turn to a pastor or other counselor who has said anti-gay things publicly or privately, or to one who has never publicly acknowledged any but monogamous heterosexual relationships as “normal” and valid. Official utterances and position papers to the contrary notwithstanding, the church may see fit to wink at adulterous pre- and post-marital heterosexual relationships, but it becomes outraged at the possibility of a loving, caring same-sex relationship.

Any lesbian who is in seminary or contemplating going to seminary should probably plan to be ordained without coming out, unless she is in a denomination whose ordination process is in the hands of a limited number of persons whose consciousness she has time and opportunity to raise.

For that matter, in most denominations there are still pockets of opposition to the ordination of *any* woman, even in denominations that have ordained women for decades. Job openings for ordained women

are no better than elsewhere in the work sector. When available, they are either on a multiple staff (almost invariably headed by a man) or in a small congregation that has trouble supporting any pastor adequately. The fishbowl existence of pastors makes any arrangement other than heterosexual marriage or celibacy extremely difficult, and the latter is viewed suspiciously because few people can imagine themselves living a celibate life.

Some of my ordained sisters have managed to live with a lover for "financial" or "companionship" reasons and have succeeded in allaying suspicion, but often it is at great personal cost and with a lack of real freedom to be themselves except when the doors are locked and the shades drawn, or when they escape on vacation. Always the fear is there that one day one will slip and say "we" when one should have said "I." To whom can you go when your relationship needs supportive counseling? *Not* to the bishop or conference president or area minister, and not to your "brother" pastor!

Needless to say, the lay person is no better situated. Rarely can a gay laywoman call on her pastor for help with a broken relationship. Unless she has a supportive circle of friends or is fortunate enough to be in a large city with nonjudgmental, experienced counselors available at a price she can afford, her only option may be the gay bar scene, where one has friends as long as one has money and where the bar is probably male-owned and may be controlled by organized crime.

Death to the Institutional Church?

Another lesbian pattern is to seek out a Metropolitan Community Church, or to attend meetings of the gay caucuses of the Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches that are large enough to have local chapters with weekly gatherings for worship, supportive sharing and socializing. But, just as in the larger gay community, the leaders and members of Integrity (Episcopal), Dignity (Roman Catholic) and the MCC are predominantly male. There are local exceptions in all three groups, and the MCC has made progress toward training women pastors of real competence; but in general lesbian leadership is rare. Apart from this problem, however, these organizations have provided important spiritual outlets for lesbians who still want to be a part of the church and especially for those who have come either from a highly liturgical tradition or from a fundamentalist or Pentecostal tradition.

There are other denominational gay caucuses (in the American Baptist, Disciples of Christ, United Methodist, United Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Mennonite/Brethren, Unitarian, Lutheran, Evangel-

ical—and Jewish—traditions), but these groups usually do not meet regularly enough to fulfill the need for worship. They concentrate on consciousness-raising and lobbying at all levels of the denomination's life, on providing support and information through newsletters, and they offer limited counseling and referrals.

Finally, we turn to the frequently chosen option for the lesbian who can no longer live within her church: She leaves it behind. Perhaps she will explore the growing experiences of women's spirituality, or stifle her own spirituality completely and declare herself an atheist if asked.

This, of course, is not only a lesbian phenomenon. Many feminists perceive, with Sally Gearhart, that traditional Christianity—with its male supremacy, its vested interest in the perpetuation of the nuclear family, its insidious support of sex-role socialization—is irreconcilably opposed to feminism and liberation. The church's commitment seems to be to subjugate women and annihilate "life-giving and life-sustaining qualities." They see the churches' moves to give women a piece of the pie—a few ordinations, a few committee and board jobs, a few language changes in the constitution of liturgy—as tactics to divide and conquer, to co-opt women into the system, silencing their demands for a total rebuilding of the church and its theology. For "reform" and "renewal" are tokenism and liberal cop-outs when the system itself is based on a vertical, hierarchical, authoritarian, competitive structure and theology.

With Sally Gearhart, these women call for the death of the institutional church: "If the gospel is to live, then the vertical structure will have to be laid on its side—horizontalized—and that, to me, means the death of the institutional church." "The sooner it dies, the sooner we can be about living the Gospel." "Personal integrity allows no other alternatives."

No lesbian or feminist in the church can ignore these words. "Is there life after birth?" the button asks. "Is there new life outside the church?" our sisters ask as they struggle with new forms and new theology. The world watches with joy or disdain, with hope or fear, with pride or loathing—but it watches.

Letting in the Light of Freedom

And I watch also, as I find myself searching for an answer to my own dilemma: to stay in the institution or to leave it, to leave it quietly or with a big bang, or to tear it down in order to rebuild the true church? Because for now I have chosen none of the options I've discussed, deciding instead to remain, as an open lesbian, within the institutional church.

I have known since I was seven years old that I was "different," that my primary emotional attach-

ments were to other girls. I don't know what "caused" it, nor do I know what causes heterosexuality. I do know that either orientation is established very early in childhood, and that neither is contagious! Choice is involved only at the point of one's *expression* or *repression* of one's affectional preference; persons of either orientation may choose to be celibate or to enter into relationships with other persons. In such instances it is the quality of those relationships—not their nature—that should be of primary importance.

And yet we live in a homophobic culture, a culture in which we fear our own sexuality and same-sex relationships. In the long run this really is a fear of loving ourselves. It is played on by sex-role stereotyping—the forcing of boys and girls into "suitable" role models and expecting them to pair off at the appropriate age and carry out their adult familial functions. This, when the reality of human existence is that we all have both masculine and feminine characteristics; we all fall somewhere along a continuum of sexual preference on which we may or may not act overtly. We are not made to fix exclusively into either male or female boxes, and most of us suffer by being forced to do so.

The lesbian has opted out of this stereotyped role, out of "woman's place" and its dependence on men. She loves women; she does not necessarily hate men. She struggles in two worlds: She finds the world of women's liberation fearful of her; a lesbian on the line for the Equal Rights Amendment in Springfield, Ill. was ordered by the non-gay leaders to put down her sign reading "Lesbians for Equal Rights." And she finds the world of gay liberation can be as chauvinistic as the straight male culture. Lesbians are women-identified; we do not accept male definitions of us nor male control over our bodies. We find it far easier to give and receive love honestly in our situation, which for us is freer of power struggles than are male-female relationships in a male supremacist culture.

Lesbians and gay men are not discriminated against so long as we pass as "straight." But there is inner pain in this existence. We joke about the day when every gay person turns lavender and the world discovers how many of us there are. We are in every family, church and school, every town and city, every business, profession and political position; we are of every race, age, marital status and life style. Some of us have children and raise them just like anyone else. We live alone or with a lover, in a commune or with our families.

Gay people want what every other human being wants: the power to determine our own lives, to worship as we choose, to live, study and work to the best of

our abilities, to pursue our happiness and to make a maximum contribution to society. We do not want tokenism or toleration, or paternalistic or maternalistic acceptance. We do want to be affirmed as persons created by God, for whom Christ died, who are full recipients of God's grace.

"Coming out," then, consists in affirming oneself as a whole, worthy human being, who in fact finds one's primary emotional and/or sexual fulfillment in relationship with another person of the same gender. It is to risk sharing who one is with another person. As we pull our closet doors off their hinges, letting in the light of freedom, we let in hatred and pain, but also love and joy. Being out is too precious an experience to want to go back again. And you find inner strength and the strength from your faith and community to help you exist "out there." In fact, one occasionally wants to go to every pulpit, seminary chair, educational wing, organ loft, graduate school faculty, campus ministry and denominational office and drag our gay sisters and brothers out into the light of day to affirm who they are and to be gay and proud. But we will never reveal their identity, because each must decide in her/his own heart the time and place in which, and the people to whom, to come out. Meanwhile, each needs the support of trusted friends in and out of the church with whom to be open and to overcome the protective walls and masks we all construct.

"Coming out" is also to demand of the church that it affirm the broad spectrum of sexuality. As we read the story of Jesus with the woman at the well in Samaria, we discover that she admitted who she was to Jesus and *in that context* Jesus for the first time revealed himself as the Christ. Is the church able to be so open that it can bestow the gift of freedom on its gay members to affirm who they are? Can we be admitted to continuing dialogue within the church in concern for the full range of human sexuality?

Calling the Church to Be the Church

For too long, whites have decided what is best for the Third World peoples in church and society. Slowly, we are relinquishing some of our control and money to Third World leadership, allowing ourselves to listen to them address issues of concern to all human beings, rather than seeking to restrict them to consideration only of Third World issues. Will the church ever enlist the expertise of its gay members in a discussion of the full range of sexuality? Will it consider deficient any reports *about* homosexuality or any reports on marriage and family life if they have no input from gays or singles?

I stay in the church that has oppressed me and my

gay sisters and brothers because I believe what is taught me about God and love and grace and redemption and justice. I want to see that church live up to its best self in God's name. So I am compelled to criticize it at the risk of becoming a victim of its homophobia. I must speak from inside its walls about what gay liberation has taught me about God and people and about love. My denomination will not listen to me if I speak from within the Metropolitan Community Churches or if I speak from outside the Christian community.

The church needs to be dealing with the affirmation of personhood, the integrity of peoples' lives, the wholeness of human relationships, and the realization of human potential, so that all may be in touch with God and one another and may be free to be themselves. Our constant concern about sexuality, our fear of it, our labeling it sinful and evil is un-Christian. We need to see our sexuality as an important God-given source of energy, motivation and strength in our whole lives.

Yet the church is unwilling to see sexuality in light of the Gospel. It pushes heterosexual monogamy but looks the other way when marital infidelity occurs or when marriages break down—in part because the nuclear family has been freighted so heavily with the responsibility to provide for all its members' emotional, psychological, physical and economic needs. The extended family, or the whole church as family, can better provide for these needs.

As an open lesbian in the church, I see myself as a bridge between lesbian-feminism and the church. It is the nature of bridges to be walked on, and I have felt a lot of footprints going in both directions! One can envision a bridge as it stretches over a stream, one "foot" planted on each side and oneself being split apart. This, too, is a feeling I share with other open lesbians and gay brothers in the church; for we in the gay caucuses of mainline religious bodies seek to minister to both church and world, and within each to gays, bisexuals and heterosexuals. As a result, we are assailed from all sides at every turn.

One day may bring an impassioned letter for help from a closeted gay Christian feeling the pain of remaining silent while gay people are excoriated by otherwise-loving church folk. The next day may bring a call to testify before an openly homophobic city council as it jokingly debates a civil rights bill that would affect 200,000 gay people in Philadelphia, testimony on behalf of the church that too often has undergirded just such homophobic government attitudes.

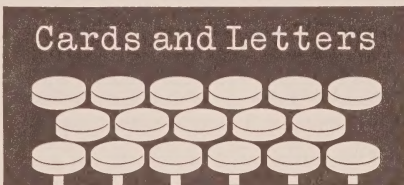
The next day might bring a call from a gay brother in a rural parish who wants to leave the ministry be-

cause the pain and hypocrisy of his closet are getting to be too much to bear. Or a call from a lesbian seminarian who I know will make a very good pastor, but only if she is able to be ordained and get a job without a pulpit committee knowing of her orientation; the dishonesty of it all is weighing her down.

Or I get a letter from a gay sister who left the church because she feels that it is oppressing the spirits of her gay sisters. She asks when I'll see the light and get out, giving my energy and love to my sisters instead of to the church that will never listen to me. And I muse about my secular and church history courses and remember that there was almost no mention of "herstory"—as if half the human race never even existed except as bearers for the men who were the stuff of history. I agonize over each of these brothers and sisters, sharing their pain, and I try to give some sense of comfort and understanding.

I daily reevaluate my role in the church. I need to continue to call the church to be the church, and so I stay and fight. But with Sally Gearhart, I affirm: "Every day the price of our staying and the price of our leaving must be calculated."

For those still in the closet out of fear of job or home or family situations, I offer my love and understand-



Centuries in Collision

TO THE EDITOR: In science fiction circles I believe it is called an "alternate universe": changing an event in history to produce results different from actual events. To find an example of the genre in your journal ("Deprogramming Television," by William F. Fore, May 2) is rather startling. It is indeed remarkable to learn that John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) was a mentor of the Founding Fathers, especially Jefferson (1743-1826), and that Mill was followed by Adam Smith (1723-1790) and his *Wealth of Nations* (1776).

J. R. DUNLAP
New York, N.Y.

Oops. If we could in fact invent an alternate universe, we would go there and hide. Author and editors join in acknowledging the error, in deploring it and in submitting that the mistake in chronology does not affect the argument of the article. Apologies, however, to all who were disturbed.

ing, my empathy and support—and my hopes and prayers for your eventual liberation from the pain of hiding. I pray, too, for the liberation of those in the church who are blinded by homophobia and fear of sexuality that they may come to know, love and affirm their own beings and their gay brothers and sisters in the faith, that together we may seek God's will for our lives in this world.

Dom Helder Camara told of a Brazilian proverb when he spoke at the International Eucharistic Congress in 1976: "When we dream alone it is only a dream. But when we dream together it is the beginning of reality." God grant that we may dream and work together for a world of peace, justice, liberation and love for all.

Shalom.



the dynamics of sexual anxiety

james harrison

HOMOSEXUALITY IS A FACT. Best estimates based on research suggest that five of every one hundred persons are exclusively homosexual throughout life, and that one person in every three has had some homosexual experience.

Anxiety about homosexuality is also a fact. Few topics are so difficult to discuss. Everyone knows homosexuality exists; few want to talk about it. When discussions do occur they are often strained and uncomfortable; tempers flare easily. The issue is indeed a loaded one. It carries a huge burden of anxiety.

My aim here is to explore the psycho-social dynamics of this anxiety and to measure the cost we all pay for it. (The cost falls on gays and straights alike, though we pay in different currencies.) In part this article is occasioned by the current controversy over the ordination of openly gay persons, and by the studies about homosexuality now under way in several church bodies. To examine these dynamics requires touching on a number of issues which cannot be explored in detail. Fortunately, there is now no shortage of sound sources of information for those who wish to expand their understanding. Some of these sources are listed in an accompanying note.

Two operational assumptions underlie this discussion, one having to do with the relationship between the church and culture, the other with the relationship of homosexuality to sexuality in general. My first assumption is that no adequate, distinctively Christian sex ethic now exists. Many persons and some sub-

communities of Christians are confident that they know the requirements of a Christian sex ethic; their views, however, differ widely from the view of others who are equally confident.

The problem with most articulated ethics of sexuality is their failure to integrate and synthesize cross-cultural data and the results of recent research in various disciplines with a consistent affirmation of humane values. In the light of that research it appears to me that the perspectives on sex in general and homosexuality in particular which are most often cited as guides for contemporary behavior are *not* distinctively Christian but are derivatives of the common culture. That culture has, of course, been influenced by Christian sources; nevertheless, the attitudes toward sex that are drawn from it often represent an uncritical acceptance of the taken-for-granted world rather than a creative Christian sex ethic that embodies the interpersonal values of love, commitment, freedom and forgiveness. Because this taken-for-granted perspective is familiar it is comfortable; attempts to examine it critically or to synthesize a humane sex ethic that takes both Christian values and contemporary knowledge into account are met with resistance.

In my view, then, what is at stake is not the defense of a Christian view of sex over against the onslaught of permissive hedonists who believe everything imaginable and pleasurable is all right. Rather the controversy is about taken-for-granted perspectives on sexuality in the common culture often identified as Christian. These perspectives require examination to determine whether they have empirical bases and can withstand ethical scrutiny.

JAMES HARRISON is a clinical psychologist who serves at the Bronx Psychiatric Hospital and in private practice. He is a minister-member of the Presbytery of New York City.

My second assumption is that homosexuality cannot be understood apart from deeper perspectives on sex in general. For this reason I believe it is dangerous for church bodies to study homosexuality and make policies about it apart from the larger context. This narrow focus permits the survival of the assumption that the requisites for a healthy ethic of heterosexuality are already on hand and that the only problem is homosexuality. Immediately this places homosexual persons under the burden of having to prove that the quality of their lives measures up to an achieved ideal of heterosexual existence. If any progress is to be made in understanding homosexuality, it will necessarily be in the context of understanding human sexuality in general.

The Source of Stereotypes

Considering that one in twenty persons around us is homosexual, why is it that people know so little about homosexuality and about homosexual people—and that so much of what they think they know is false? As one instance: Heterosexual people generally believe they can “tell” who is and who is not homosexual. This is not true; even with psychological tests it is not possible to determine a person’s sexual orientation with certainty. Only when individuals choose to reveal their orientation, either in trust or in defiance, is it possible to know.

The reason for our ignorance is simple. Intolerance of homosexuality translates into repression; repression encourages invisibility; invisibility and stereotypes go together. Though some stereotypes may have some basis in reality, the more common ones are so inaccurate that they help gay people who wish to remain invisible to do so.

Most heterosexual people believe, for example, that homosexuals typically mimic the behavior of the other sex; homosexual men are thought to be “effeminate,” homosexual women “mannish”; such behavior is considered to be an indication of homosexuality. This is an especially dangerous stereotype that deserves some analysis. Before the advent of gay liberation, when it was all but impossible for gay people to be honest about their erotic preferences, some sort of communication system was necessary to help them identify who could be trusted. One means of communication was the voluntary and selective use of behavior patterns usually associated with the other sex; special forms of communication are not unusual among repressed groups. Today deliberate role-playing and mimicking of the other sex, except as a game, have significantly diminished; when they exist they are usually decoded as expressions of pre-liberation consciousness.

In contrast, some men and women develop personality styles which incorporate traits and qualities most frequently associated with the other sex. These persons may or may not be homosexual. The assumption that sexual orientation can be determined by the observation of social behavior results in both “false positive” and “false negative” classification.

Other common stereotypes are that homosexuals occupy certain kinds of jobs and that almost all of them live in large cities. What measure of truth can be found here follows from the reality that gay people choose, when choice is possible, those working and living situations where they can most easily be themselves. But the common-enough belief that most gays are florists or artists, actors or hairdressers, and that they all prefer New York or San Francisco is absurd on its face. Gay people are everywhere: in Meridian, Miss. as in Minneapolis, Minn. There are gay ministers, teachers and physicians; gay nurses and garbage collectors; gay football players, firemen, policemen, truck drivers and store clerks. There is apparently no important difference in the incidence of homosexuality by the categories of race, religion, nationality or on an urban-rural continuum. Some gay people are enormously talented and/or extraordinarily humane; others are dull and selfish.

In short, the one thing homosexual people have in common other than their sexual orientation is not a standard behavioral pattern, a predictable kind of talent, a particular measure of virtue or any other human characteristic; it is, rather, a common experience of discrimination. It is because of intolerance that so many are invisible, and it is largely because of invisibility that stereotypes persist.

A powerful source of hostility toward homosexuals, evidenced in many a school-board battle, is the belief that homosexual people seduce children. Obviously sexual relationships involving the abuse of physical or psychological power are morally unacceptable. But the notion that homosexuals are peculiarly prone to compulsive expression of sexuality, or that they force their wishes on other persons (including children) to a greater extent than heterosexuals, is not borne out by statistical comparisons—a point not debated among sex researchers. There is in fact some evidence to the contrary. If a special fear of homosexual seduction persists among heterosexuals it is in large part because of a pre-existing judgment, which is then sufficiently confirmed by the occurrence of isolated incidents involving dehumanizing activity.

Something a little different must be said about the charge of “promiscuity” among homosexuals. First it should be noted that the issue of the number of sex partners must be evaluated independently from

the issue of whether those relationships are homosexual or heterosexual. Some gay people are committed to one sex partner, and some straight people are involved in multiple relationships. Second, the issue must be evaluated in its context. Often enough in history, including current history, whole racial groups have been labeled shiftless or lazy by societies that deny members of these groups any reward for diligence. Our culture provides no support for stable gay relationships and exerts many sanctions against them; especially when given that reality, the charge of promiscuity is a curious one.

Needless to say, stereotypes and prejudices of any sort are not easily removed from the mind. Perhaps the most useful point to be made here in summary of what has already been said is to stress again the ubiquity and the invisibility of homosexuality. Or, to speak in homelier and more personal terms, gay people are our co-workers whom we respect, our relatives whom we love. They are our friends, parents, children, siblings, uncles and aunts. To the extent that we are unaware of this, we are ourselves victims of the repression which causes gay people to be silent.

Attitudes Toward Sex

In our common culture sex is seen as a powerful and perhaps dangerous force which can be contained only within marriage; moreover, at a deep level the belief persists that sex should be used only for procreation. The dis-ease of heterosexual persons about homosexuals appears to be grounded in the recognition that sexual activity between persons of the same sex necessarily means nonprocreative sexual activity outside of marriage as we define it. Herein lies the necessary connection to a more general perspective on sexuality.

This common view is partially derived from the biblical tradition. Its social-historical-political context was a small ancient Near Eastern tribe dependent for its survival on an expanding population. Among the ancient Hebrew people lusty sex was affirmed in marriage, and in a simple nomadic economy marriage for most people was expected and arranged soon after sexual maturity.

Another strand of our contemporary perspective is apparently derived from distinctively nonbiblical sources; it is a spirit-body dualism that tends to denigrate sex and all other bodily functions and needs, which are seen as opposed to the spiritual dimension of human existence. This otherworldly strand has been the predominant one, and its effect has been a bowdlerization of the earthier, more worldly, more holistic Hebraic element. One reason

why the fashioning of a contemporary sex ethic is so difficult is that these two sources of our present perspective are not complementary but rather incompatible.

In the contemporary synthesis, the argument that sex should be confined to marriage has been premised on the need for secure family environments in which children can grow to healthy adulthood. What this view misses is that marriage does not create families; rather, love and commitment create families. The structure and mores of families have varied radically. The ancient nomadic Near Eastern family bore little resemblance to patterns of family life which evolved in Europe and America. The contemporary normative nuclear family—a consequence of changing economic structures—is indeed constituted by marriage, but may be uniquely unsuited to the nurture of children, to say nothing of the needs of the parents. Thus heterosexual marriage guarantees nothing: neither love nor commitment. And even where these values are present, marriage cannot constitute a family suitable for the nurture of its members in the face of powerfully hostile social and economic circumstances.

What follows is that the defense of specific institutional arrangements is far less appropriate than the strengthening of the core human values. A particular loving, committed homosexual relationship as the basis for a family is far more conducive to the physical, psychological and moral health of children than a heterosexual relationship without these values. Further, all nuclear family units need the support of a broader social network of relatives, biological or “adopted,” who can share in the responsibilities of nurture.

Apart from defense of the family, seen as structure, there are of course other components in the dynamics of anxiety about homosexuality. Fear of sex leads to unrealistic attempts to confine and limit sexual expression. Expressions of sexuality outside the commonly defined limits are condemned, and those who do not or cannot accept these limits are stigmatized. The fear of condemnation and discrimination leads to silence and invisibility on the part of those who do not accept the limits, and to ignorance about sexual activity on the part of those who are uncritical of the common culture.

The Fear of Touching

More important is the dynamic projection and denial which develops in a culture that stigmatizes homosexuality. All healthy people develop affectional relationships with persons of their own sex. These relationships may be between fathers and sons,

mothers and daughters, between peer-group friends or across generations. Many of these relationships involve spontaneous physical contact that may be experienced as pleasurable; yet all too often this experience results in stiffness, embarrassment and withdrawal.

In such cases a previously accepted cultural prohibition against homosexuality has resulted in a behavioral response that denies the possibility of experiencing pleasure from the presence or touch of a friend of the same sex. Because of this inculcated fear straight men inhibit or deny their wish to touch other men, thus giving away their own freedom and powers. In order to sustain a definition of ourselves as "not homosexual," it is necessary both to minimize the experience of same-sex affection and to maintain a view of homosexual persons as somehow radically different.

In reality, while a small proportion of people are exclusively homosexual and a larger but unknown proportion exclusively heterosexual, the remaining majority appear to be able to respond erotically to both women and men. What each person does with these potentialities remains a personal choice. But it is the possibility of response associated with the socially condemned status of homosexuality that activates fear. It is only natural to fear what is socially stigmatized; nobody wants to be isolated, labeled, regarded as unnaturally different. It has been frequently observed that those who most fear homosexuality are not people incapable of homosexual response, but rather those who are threatened by their own impulses. To sustain their inhibitions, they must characterize homosexual persons as nonhuman, abnormal, or "sick."

The confusion between homosexual orientation and flexibility in sex-role behavior creates pressure in developing children and adults alike to conform to traditional sex-stereotyped roles. Since the male role is more highly valued in our society, men experience greater pressure to conform; but the costs of conformity are greater for women. For women, the perpetuation of traditional role conformity is manifestly unjust in that traditional roles deny women equal access to education, career opportunities, economic and political power. Both may experience psychological injury rising out of a fear of not being able to achieve role expectations and out of the need to deny aspects of self not in conformity to these expectations. ("Boys don't cry" can mean "Boys are not allowed feelings"; "girls shouldn't hit" translates into "girls submit.") For some men, the need to achieve unquestionable male status may result in development of compensatory "masculine" behaviors that are dangerous and destructive to themselves and others.

For Further Reading

The first two books in this selection are devoted to the larger context of human sexuality. The first is technical, the second more popular.

Money, John and Ehrhardt, Anke, *Man and Woman: Boy and Girl: The Differentiation and Dimorphism of Gender Identity from Conception to Maturity* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972).

Money, John, and Tucker, Patricia, *Sexual Signatures: On Being a Man or a Woman* (Little, Brown and Co., 1975).

The following two books on the social roles and status of men and women, both written from theological perspectives, are relevant because of the connection between the oppression of gay people and the oppression of women.

Bianchi, Eugene, and Reuther, Rosemary, *From Machismo to Mutuality: Essays on Sexism and Woman-Man Liberation* (Paulist Press, 1976).

Butcher, Glenn, *Straight, White, Male* (Fortress Press, 1976).

Two books by social scientists, the first an educational psychologist, the second a clinical psychologist:

Churchill, Wainright, *Homosexual Behavior Among Males* (Anchor Press, 1973).

Hoffman, Martin, *The Gay World* (Bantam, 1968).

These four books are written from a gay liberation perspective:

Abbott, Sidney and Love, Barbara, *Sappho Was a Right-on Woman* (Stein and Day, 1972).

Altman, Dennis, *Homosexual Oppression and Liberation* (Avon, 1971).

Clark, Don, *Loving Someone Gay* (Celestial Arts, Millbrae, Calif., 1977).

Katz, Jonathan, *Gay American History* (Crowell, 1976). A documentary history.

Finally, a rich historical work making clear that "childhood" and "family" are not constants but have undergone frequent and profound changes in history:

Aries, Philippe, *Centuries of Childhood* (Random House, 1962).

(Editor's note: Titles of books recommended by both Peggy Way and James Harrison are listed only once, in the box accompanying Ms. Way's article. Among them are books by McNeill, Weinberg, Weltge and Oberholzer. Dr. Harrison also highly recommends ("Read this if you read nothing else") the article by James B. Nelson, "Homosexuality and the Church," published in the April 4 issue of C&C.)

It is no accident that one confusion between erotic orientation and sex roles has led to a negative definition of "masculinity" as "not feminine." Note that most epithets hurled at homosexual men reveal a deep derogatory attitude toward women. Male fear

of homosexuality may be seen as an extension of hostility toward women. Since direct expression of this hostility is usually inhibited, gay males easily become surrogate victims. Violence directed toward gay men reveals the depth of the threat of denied impulses.

Fear of homosexuality has contributed greatly to unnecessary anxieties about sex on the part of maturing adolescents, and to unnecessary anxiety among parents that their children will not grow up "straight." Among persons who have recognized their orientation to be homosexual, there is danger of self-doubt and loss of self-esteem to the extent that they have internalized the common view. Furthermore, communication within families is disrupted. Many gay people assume that parents will be disappointed and hurt, and therefore cut off open communication with them. Parents are caught between loving their children and affirming a morality that condemns the children.

The problem is worsened by prevalent psychiatric theories which imply that homosexuality is a consequence of distorted parental personalities or relationships. These theories simultaneously condemn parents and children alike. The question of the causes of homosexuality cannot be considered here, apart from noting that the question itself reveals an underlying assumption that it is bad to be homosexual. Though advocates of one view or another will argue to the contrary, none of the theories about the origins of homosexuality are supported by reliable

evidence. Adequate explanations will emerge only in the context of better general understanding of psycho-social development, and not out of attempts to find means of suppressing ("curing") homosexual behavior.

The Cost of Fear

It is fear of homosexuality that is destructive and not homosexuality per se. Since the determinants of any person's sexual orientation are complex and related to many variables in her/his development, it is clear, heterosexual anxiety notwithstanding, that homosexuality is not contagious! The fear that a teacher or minister could induce homosexuality in a child reveals a sad lack of confidence in the strength of heterosexual inclinations. Preachments against homosexuality that are grounded on the need to save family life are misplaced. The family is inevitable; what will determine the quality of human relationships within families is the stability of human networks surrounding them, and that will be determined in greatest part by economics.

The time has come for heterosexuals to come out of the closet of anxiety and to meet their gay sisters and brothers face to face. When both address questions about the human condition we will be in a better position to get accurate answers about the nature of human sexuality. And only then will the conditions for serious reflection about the ethics of sexuality begin to emerge. □

At St. Luke's Parish The Peace of Christ Is Not For Gays

Louie Crew

If you're gay where gays are not tolerated, should you be "discreet"? Is it all right to be out of the closet on Manhattan's Christopher Street but not all right in Plains (Georgia) country? When a particular congregation is affronted by the presence of a declared homosexual couple, how should church authorities respond?

These questions are indirectly but vividly addressed in the following autobiographical account. Louie Crew is associate professor of English at Fort Valley State College in Georgia. He is the founder of Integrity, national organization of gay Episcopalians, and until recently editor of its journal, Gay Episcopal Forum. He has written on literature, theater,

liturgy and theology for such publications as Saturday Review, College English, The Living Church, and Lutheran Forum.

IN EARLY NOVEMBER 1976, almost the same day that the Plains Baptist Church agreed to admit blacks to membership, only 60 miles up the road, the priest and vestry of St. Luke's Episcopal church in Fort Valley, Ga. informed the diocesan Standing Committee and Bishop Bennett Sims that their parish would have to be dismantled brick by brick before they would agree to withdraw their request that I, a self-

affirmed gay parishioner, "find some other place of worship that may be more in sympathy to your thinking and efforts toward gay people."

As in Plains, the Fort Valley congregation had made its initial decision to discriminate much earlier, back in March 1976, when they mailed the request for me to leave. Seventeen months before that, my lover and I had founded Integrity, a national organization for gay Episcopalians and our friends; but we had never publicly introduced the gay issues at the parish, except by our presence.

As in Plains, outsiders' attention to their discrimination stunned our congregation, who, having done their devilment in what they thought was secrecy, had hoped to contain it as a "family affair." Though hardly on the scale given the Plains decision, United Press International carried reports by writer David Anderson. Scores of letters came to St. Luke's, some praising and others protesting the decision. Almost as if in direct dialogue with the Fort Valley parish, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church meeting in Minneapolis in September 1976 resolved that "homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the church." Back in Fort Valley, the bishop and Standing Committee then met with the St. Luke's vestry to see what could be done locally to supply this "love, acceptance and pastoral concern and care."

Under pressure, the Plains Baptist Church reversed its stated discriminatory practice of several years; St. Luke's, Fort Valley, stood stubbornly defiant of diocesan and national leadership.

Since I am the only white communicant at St. Luke's it is very tempting for many to explain the vestry's rejection as principally racial, a way of ridding the black church of white trash, particularly in the face of the all-white hierarchy that came down from Atlanta to mediate. The vicar, the Rev. Cecil Cowan, has repeatedly boasted in our pulpit that in the black community in Oklahoma where he grew up, "We would shoot any white man seen on our streets after dark." Once he asserted of me in the presence of Bishop Sims: "I want to kill him; I want to kill him!"

On the Sunday after he'd heard that the Standing Committee was coming to mediate, he hurled the Communion wine at my upper palate, perhaps appropriately leaving off the sentence "Blood of Christ, Cup of Salvation," and after the service was over he screamed at me for all to hear at the church door as I departed: "*Boy*, are you sick!? You'd better leave me alone or else" In my 40 years, because I am white, I have never had my manhood

systematically denigrated by the epithet *boy*, so it had not the same power to sting me, except that I grieved to know that he was thereby saying the meanest thing he knew how to say.

Similarly, Father Cowan attacked our friend who had spoken on our behalf before the Standing Committee, making a scene at the store where she worked as a grocery checker, shouting, "What do you mean going up there with those white men, and you a black girl? You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" Even the vestry in the March letter asking me to leave hinted at this kind of attitude: "We would suggest further that you try promoting this movement at the other Episcopal Church in Fort Valley"

The other Episcopal church is the all-white St. Andrew's, whose rector had already told my lover and me that as a racially integrated gay couple we would not be welcome even to drop by his parish for a chat. Since the only way to attend an integrated parish in these parts is to integrate one, St. Luke's was always our only choice, particularly since my spouse, as a Baptist, could not join either. Furthermore, St. Luke's is the campus parish at the college where I teach. It would hardly make sense for me to retreat from my colleagues and from my black family to worship in a lily-white setting; I certainly have never had any desire to do so.

A Different Drumbeat

While race undoubtedly colored the judgments made by some against me, the matter is far more complex. When the vestry of my former parish, St. Paul's in Orangeburg, S.C., heard of the actions by St. Luke's, their response was dramatically different; yet at St. Paul's I was also the only white communicant; and Orangeburg, like Fort Valley, is a small Southern town dominated by black higher education. Father Carlisle Ramcharan, my priest in Orangeburg, had been Father Cowan's immediate predecessor at St. Luke's in Fort Valley. The Orangeburg vestry wrote:

As a vestry and as individuals we are inordinately distressed by the news that you have been asked to "find some other place of worship" as an alternative to the Episcopal church you have chosen to attend. This request, conveyed to you through a document signed by members of one vestry, places upon all vestries (including ours) the burdensome question as to the nature of our functions. Are we elected to oust from our churches those whose lives do not conform to what we consider the norm, whose moral integrity [is] nationally debatable, or who deviate from any other arbitrary standards we undertake to establish? Our answer as a vestry is that we believe and we are confident the Epis-

copal Church believes, that we are all one under God, called into one holy fellowship in which the claim to membership of any individual increases in direct proportion to his need for grace.

We recall your years among us with great fondness and still appreciate the commendable contribution you made to our worship. . . . As vestry members we accept in varying degrees your view on human sexuality, but nonetheless we admire and respect you for your outright honesty and unbending convictions. . . .

The letter went on to offer me a permanent invitation to re-establish my membership with them "if you are ever denied admission to, or made to feel unwelcome in, any other Episcopal congregation."

I wanted to share the good news of this letter. I conferred with Bishop Sims, who wanted me to keep it under a lid. Since I could not agree with his request, I released the letter. The bishop was furious, as I learned through the local paper headline: "Bishop Issues Rebuke for Defiance of Order." The article explained in part:

Bishop Sims telephoned *The Macon Telegraph and News Friday* and issued the following statement: "Dr. Louis Crew, communicant of St. Luke's, Fort Valley, has been rebuked by his bishop for defiance of an explicit request that he not further disturb the peace and good order of the church by making public an exchange of correspondence between himself and a congregation of his former membership in the Diocese of South Carolina. Dr. Crew has been summoned to meet with the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese of Atlanta. This disciplinary move is not directed to his identity as a homosexual."

Imagine the effect if Jimmy Carter's cousin, standing in the door of the Plains Baptist Church, had whispered, but to no newpersons, "We've decided to find a place for these people so long as no one knows anything about our decision." How can one ask someone to keep something within the family while at the same time not treating the person as a member of the family?

What the bishop called a "confrontation" was delayed for almost four months, until after the pro-gay resolution at General Convention. Still, in late September 1976, when I went to meet the Standing Committee and the Bishop, I went with legal counsel, on the advice of William Stringfellow and several other interested persons in the church. My attorney began by establishing that the canons of the diocese do not authorize discipline of the laity, short of excommunication, which the bishop and the Standing Committee had expressly denied as intentions. Bishop Sims explained that he had described our session as "disciplinary" only in anger, with no authority. Then the Standing Committee gave a compassionate hearing to my witness, and later made their visit to my vestry to work toward conciliation, as I mentioned.

The vestry itself has never talked with me, with the exception of two women members who refused to sign the original letter. Some have even complained when I have sent free copies of our *Gay Episcopal Forum* so that they would not have to rely on gossip but could judge for themselves the kind of ministry we are growing into. The heterosexual majority has placed much pressure on the several closeted gays in the church to join in opposing me, and several of the heterosexuals who have related to us in kindness have been frequently intimidated. Some who have had their hair dressed by my spouse have been talked into withdrawing that patronage. Speaking of me, Father Cowan tells people openly, "I'm not his priest. I merely give him Communion when he comes to my church." He told the bishop, "I cannot agree to be his priest." He long ago withdrew all pastoral relations with us, and often will not even speak. All this seems rather normal for the Middle Ages in which we live.

Credentials of Respectability for Sale

Bishop Sims explained to me that our openness in our relationship is what the vestry finds most offensive, and I am willing to accept this assessment. We could promiscuously isolate sexuality in a series of smutty, furtive, half-concealed affairs, as do some other gay communicants, and we would experience no flak, especially if we continued to give money, sing in the choir and/or otherwise remain in our place. The rub came when by our actions we seemed to say, "Look what a wonder of sharing God is working in our lives through our commitment to each other." That kind of statement flew in the face of too many stereotypes to be welcome. Furthermore, our openness declares our need and exposes their inability to love us.

In our parish as in most others, many heterosexual marriages are on the rocks, much alcoholism is rampant, some children are abused, many persons sport mistresses and illegitimate offspring. We do find rather incredible the claims to moral indignation about our very staid and conservative domestic life.

Our experience leads us to believe that the church is in serious danger of being subverted into becoming one of the greatest covert intelligence agencies of them all, making its major work not the nurture of children of God but rather the granting of credentials of "respectability" to paying clientele with no regard to spiritual interests. Ernest and I feel that God could not care less about his own reputation, and allowed it to be smudged for all times at Calvary for the sins of all persons, including

ours. We believe that the church should be a place for all sinners to come to the foot of the cross. Ironically, it is when we accept Christ's welcome to come just as we are that we provoke the greatest consternation from the hierarchy.

I continue to attend every mass when I am in town, at Christ's invitation. I need this nurture, especially in view of the lay ministry in Integrity, which now has grown into a national "parish" of over 1,000 members, about one-third of whom are gay priests, many of whom are dreadfully isolated. The efficacy of Father Cowan's priesthood is not dependent on his state of grace, no more than is Christ's love for me dependent upon my efforts. This Anglican theological stance is important to me, and keeps me where I am. I am not in the business of church shopping. I have no desire to check out our welcome down the road in Plains, although Mr. Carter has repeatedly said some gays have been attending there.

I do feel that my continued presence, though unwelcome, is an important witness for the others at St. Luke's, for offended heterosexuals no less than for the frightened, hidden gays. Father Cowan says that several parishioners have asked him to insist on my taking communion by intinction, ostensibly to relieve their fears of getting VD from me at the altar of Christ. Surely my refusal to request intinction must revitalize for these persons what *communion* really means. More importantly, my presence is witness to our catholic faith that no one can be excommunicated by the vote or the ill-will of any vestry or other form of posse. When individuals force upon me their de facto excommunication—as when my pew is invariably empty until most others are chugged full; as when the kiss of peace is done away with—they fence themselves out, for *nothing* can separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Varieties of Pain

I can speak only for myself in this struggle, but I am ever aware of some of the dimensions for others involved. Father Cowan once told the Bishop and me how, at the beginning of his ministry in Oklahoma, he had been required to sit outside in the cold at a diocesan banquet at which blacks could not eat with whites. I was deeply moved. I grieve that he sees me as part of that same white conspiracy.

Bishop Sims is a man who has been vexed severely in this dialogue, feeling, quite rightly, his first duties as *pastor parvorum*. He has shared with me his appreciation for our freeing him of some of his naivete, recalling specifically his shock at the time three years ago, before the founding of Integrity, when Ernest and I together visited him in his office

to ask for support for gays. The mere presence of two live gays was news to him.

It is important for non-gays to strive for rationality in confronting us. When they don't they typically project their own irrationality onto us, and the pressures of our lives often yield behavior that would seem to support those misconceptions. Ernest and I did not meet and establish a relationship just to offend St. Luke's or to shock Bishop Sims. Our openness with these people may, in the long run, be more generous than would be the expected secrecy with which so many gay bishops, other clergy and laity relate to the heterosexuals among us.

Nevertheless, Ernest and I have no interest in prescribing either openness or closetry for others; those decisions are much too personal and must be tailored to individual needs, timetables, personalities, etc. We are concerned that there has been a visible gay ghetto in the US and in Christendom for well over 50 years, and no established church has yet made much effort to minister to our needs. Claims to love the sinner but to hate the sin don't hold much credibility when that love is not demonstrated. They said we were "sinners" and "sick" but built no missions or hospitals for us.

If this account is short on theological detail, it is because it focuses on our day-to-day efforts at survival while heterosexuals hem and haw with our fate. It is very hard for us to believe that Romans 1 or Leviticus or I Corinthians directly provokes the most recent hate call or other mockery. We do respect the fact that persons have biblical problems, as we have had them too; but we do expect a measure of the same grace by which people now read passages about dietary laws, damnations of dwarfs, punishments for children who laugh at bald men, demands to pool church resources from all communicants, et. al. We also respect the concern of persons wanting to protect the family, but more so when they recognize that we are a part of the family, and that the most certain thing about homosexuals is that we do not reproduce ourselves in homosexual acts. We would also like more honesty about the decline of the heterosexual family, even with all the supports of society that are expressly denied to our relationships.

Were not the follow-up so threatening, we could have been amused by the theology of apostate

**EL TALLER
GRAFICO**

United Farm Workers, La Paz, Keene, Ca. 93531

**JEWELRY • BOOKS • POSTERS
BUTTONS • LEATHER • RECORDS**

Send for Our Free Brochure.

El Taller Grafico is the Graphics Workshop of the
United Farm Workers.



Bishop James Dees of the Anglican Orthodox Church, who wrote about us to the Macon paper after a tornado had devastated our town, missing our apartment: "Would one expect God to keep silent when homosexuals are tolerated? We remember what he did to Sodom and Gomorrah." That's queer power indeed, but patently bad theology, though none of the score of other Anglican-trained clergy (or any others) wrote the paper to say so in the weeks of threats we experienced following that hocus pocus.

Later even the local policemen in a group heckled me in the public streets while I was routinely posting my mail, children began regularly to ride ahead of me when I was jogging and spat on me until they made me a prisoner in our apartment, and once the employees of the local Ford dealership taunted me with the full support of their manager as I walked past. . . . By these physical abuses Christians actualize the more verbal condemnation or equivocation of their spiritual leaders. The children's spittle in our faces is tactile evidence of their pastors' and their churches' attitudes.

More typically, though, Scripture and theology are used as smokescreens, preventing the users of them from seeing us and the 20 million other gay Americans as persons for whom Christ died.

All of this is very painful and does not speak well of the Body of Christ. It is because I believe in the moral authority of the church that I speak out to redress the erosion of that moral authority by centuries of speaking in sexual ignorance. I would

indeed hush had I not faith that the Body of Christ is able to respond when it finally perceives human need. All around the country we are discovering hope in our ministry to gay Christians.

A Time to Speak

Time and again I have been told to keep quiet about what has happened at St. Luke's, Fort Valley and St. Paul's, Orangeburg—to keep it within the family. I cannot be deprived of my witness. Christian suffering is as holy as Christian joy. I agree with the vestry of St. Paul's, Orangeburg that it is dangerous to conceive of the family of God too narrowly. Furthermore, our witness to gay pain is important because most people who are not themselves hateful find it rather hard to conceive of the real hatefulness of others. Certainly most people think of gays as rather unharmed and overreacting. Such persons should consider wearing a button for 24 hours saying, "I Am Gay," or even going to the library to check out several books on homosexuality without telling the librarian, "Oh, I'm studying *them*."

My horror tale is not nearly so grim as those stories, all true, of thousands of other gay people who do not share our knowledge or our confidence that God is indeed no respecter of persons. We share the bad news of our pain in the hopes that more will join us in the effort to share the good news of Christ's indiscriminate love for any and all who call upon the name of the Lord. □

New from ORBIS

"The best Catholic book of the year." KARL RAHNER



THE COMING OF THE THIRD CHURCH

by Walbert Buhlmann

"Challenging," "daring," "provocative," "shattering" are some of the adjectives applied to the German and Italian editions of this book. Buhlmann sees the Church's mission to humanity entering a new phase, one in which new questions are being asked because the situations in which people find themselves today cannot be handled along time-honored lines. Not a book "for specialists only" but for anyone willing to face the future and think.

Cloth \$12.95, Paper \$6.95

THE MEANING OF MISSION

by Jose Comblin

The author of *Jesus of Nazareth* (Orbis 1976) combines an easily readable style with fresh insights into the now controverted question of mission.

Cloth \$6.95

THE CHURCH AND THIRD WORLD REVOLUTION

by Pierre Bigo

Bigo argues that the Church must not fail now to identify with the poor and oppressed rather than their oppressors.

Cloth \$8.95, Paper 4.95

At your bookstore, or write:

Write for complete catalog:



ORBIS BOOKS

Maryknoll, NY 10545

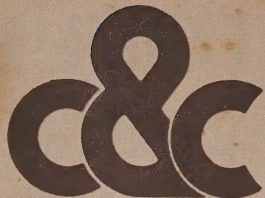
Christianity and Crisis

The 'Free Market' Myth:
Fatal Trap for Farmers

Shirley E. Greene and Richard W. Priggie

**A CALL TO
REFLECTION**

Robert G. Hoyt



Christianity and Crisis

Vol. 37, No. 17, October 31, 1977;
85 cents a copy

'Human Sexuality'

Reviews by Tom F. Driver and Joe Cunneen

0978
REV MARJORIE F RAGOMA
44 GARLAND ST
BOSTON MA
033663C
02130



FOUL PLAY

THE PALESTINE ARAB DELEGATION, with offices in New York City, has published a booklet that poses a question as frustrating as any *London Times* crossword puzzle. The question: Is this booklet more scurrilous than stupid, or more stupid than scurrilous? Here is the official C&C answer: It's a tie.

The booklet is titled "Jewish Influence on the United States Media." It proves, among other things, that the Rawling, Wyo. *Times* (circ. 4,211) is wholly under Zionist control in its handling of Middle Eastern questions. The documentation: a man named Mel Itkin is its advertising manager. The Spartanburg, S. C., *Journal* (circ. 8,709) has also been Zionized: Seymour Rosenberg is its Sunday editor. The editorial policy of *The Wall Street Journal* is "100% Zionist-inspired and controlled," says the booklet. Why? How? Because "the president . . . of its publisher, Dow Jones & Co., Inc., is Warren Henry Phillips, son of Abraham and Juliette Rosenberg Phillips."

A similar quality of evidence is offered to show that

not only *Time*, *Newsweek*, all three commercial television networks, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, but also *Popular Mechanics* (!), *Good Housekeeping* (!), *Family Health* (!) and *Junior Scholastic* (!) are parts of the network. You might think the *Pasco News* of Dade City, Fla. (circ. 1,374) would be beneath the notice of the Zionist conspiracy. Not so; under cover of Mathews, Shannon & Cullen, Inc., an advertising agency, the cabal works its will on the helpless Dade City reader—for a man named *Mel Freeman* is vice president of the agency.

In a touch altogether worthy of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the booklet says all this was no accident. After World War II the "Zionist cabal" deliberately set out to gain control of all US mass media in order to "brainwash American people, control US politicians, the US Congress, the US administration," etc., on Israel's behalf.

There is absolutely no point in discussing the quality of Mideast coverage by US media in this context. The booklet stinks of anti-Semitism. It is as crude as it is vicious. It raises serious questions about the intellectual capacities and moral discernment of all who had any hand in its production. It is seriously counterproductive to the Palestinian cause. It should be repudiated and withdrawn, now. □



Christianity and Crisis

A Christian Journal of Opinion
537 West 121st Street / New York / New York 10027

JOHN C. BENNETT / Senior Contributing Editor

Contributing Editors:

FRANK BALDWIN
ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN
JAMES H. CONE
HARVEY G. COX
JOHN R. FRY
ROBERT LEKACHMAN
JAMES R. McGRAW
MARGARET MEAD
HOWARD MOODY
ARTHUR J. MOORE
ROSEMARY RUETHER
ROGER L. SHINN
WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW

Staff:

WAYNE H. COWAN / Editor
VIVIAN LINDERMAYER / Managing Editor (on leave)
ROBERT G. HOYT / Associate Editor
CATHERINE MacDONALD / Assistant Editor
MARILYN SEVEN / Editorial Assistant

Contents:

Page

FOUL PLAY / Editors	242
"HUMAN SEXUALITY": A NEW CATHOLIC VIEW— A STRIDE TOWARD SANITY / Tom F. Driver	243
ANOTHER OPINION: TWO ROUSING CHEERS / Joe Cunneen	247
THE "FREE MARKET" MYTH: FATAL TRAP FOR FARMERS / Shirley E. Greene and Richard W. Priggie	249
A CALL TO REFLECTION / Robert G. Hoyt	253

Credits:

cover and design by Nicholas Luttinger
Christianity and Crisis, Vol. 37, No. 17, October 31, 1977
Published biweekly, except monthly in July, August and January, by
Christianity and Crisis, Inc., 537 West 121st St., New York, N. Y. 10027.
Subscription price: Canada and U.S. \$12.00; add \$2.00 for foreign postage;
students \$5.00.
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional mailing
offices.

Copyright © 1977 Christianity and Crisis, Inc.
ISSN 0009-5745

'Human Sexuality': A New Catholic View

A Stride Toward Sanity

Tom F. Driver

THIS MILESTONE OF A BOOK is sane, courageous, charitable, hopeful, judicious, biblical, Christian and Catholic. It is a welcome event for Protestant as well as Catholic moral theology. The only sad thing about it is to reflect upon how long it has taken Christianity to reach this point in the road, and how far we have yet to go. I will return to this reflection after I review the authors' very significant accomplishment.

In 1972, the board of directors of the Catholic Theological Society of America appointed a committee of five to make a study of human sexuality. The members were Anthony Kosnik (chairperson), William Carroll, Agnes Cunningham, Ronald Modras and James Schulte. This book is their report, received by the board of CTSA in 1976. It seems not to have been given formal approval by anyone, and the CTSA has done no more than to receive and arrange for publishing it. We have it as the invited thought of a committee of concerned theologians who hope to influence the magisterium and, more directly, to offer pastoral guidance for priests and lay persons. The miracle is that the committee reports no dissension within itself and no major criticism from the scholars they invited to comment on their drafts. This is surely the best book I have ever read that was written by a committee.

The authors have wisely chosen to address themselves not to *a priori* thoughts about human sexuality but to the situation in being. Putting pastoral concerns foremost has sharpened their theological focus and put them in a good position to interpret Scripture, tradition and the official teachings of the church. This stance also affords judicious use of modern research about sex.

It is no simple matter to speak to the church from within. Christianity acknowledges multiple authorities: Scripture, tradition (both formal and informal), reason, experience, the priestly office, councils of elders, individual conscience and illumination from

TOM F. DRIVER, a former member of the Editorial Board, is Paul Tillich Professor of Theology and Culture at Union Theological Seminary (NYC). His latest book, *Patterns of Grace*, will be published by Harper & Row in December.

the "mind of Christ" and the Holy Spirit. For the Roman Catholic, there is the additional fact that the chief priest of the church has been granted, in recent times, an authority to make occasional pronouncements of an absolute (i.e., "infallible") nature. One must thread one's way, often a tedious, exhausting task. It is of enormous help when one remembers, as these authors have done, the true aim of all pastoral and theological work: to set at liberty all persons and communities who trust in God for their salvation. The authors have asked themselves: How shall we view the Bible, the traditions of moral theology, the official

HUMAN SEXUALITY: New Directions in American Catholic Thought. A Study Commissioned by the Catholic Theological Society of America. Paulist Press, 1977. 322 pp., \$8.50. (Ed. Note: A separate review appears on page 247.)

teachings of the church, the state of modern knowledge (medical, psychological, sociological) and the mores of modern culture in such way as to define Christian sexual responsibility and freedom today? How may we do this without rejecting any of the rightful authority that each of these sources of knowledge is entitled to claim over us? The book is in many ways radical, but its sense of obligation to those who differ is graciously astute.

An Opening to Change

Even so, this book is going to make fur fly. The basic reason is not that it opens the door to contraception, masturbation, homosexuality and other practices abhorred by many. The reason is, rather, that the book is predicated upon an understanding of human nature as dynamic. Changes of circumstances, growth of knowledge and development of insight work real (not "accidental") changes in the human situation, and therefore in the ethical evaluation of human behavior. But if growth and change are fundamental to personhood, it follows that any rightful authority over the human person must itself be dynamic, must have the

character of growth and change. Hence the authority situation for a Christian is not static, has no absolutely fixed point, can never be known with enduring certainty. Inevitably, any such approach is deeply threatening not only to authority entrenched in high places but also to many people in low places who feel insecure without an absolute authority above them. As a Protestant once complained to me, "Why have the preachers stopped telling us what to think?" Fundamentalists claim to be able to tell us what to think with certainty, and so do those who rely without question upon the truth of papal pronouncements.

Meanwhile, as this book points out, the sexual practices of Christians (of all denominations) are not much different from those of everybody else. The Protestant I mentioned would quickly retort: "Well, they *ought* to be, and if they're not, so much the worse for those Christians, who ought to know better, if only their preachers would tell them so." The authors of *Human Sexuality* believe that such a dogmatic assurance cannot find warrant in the Bible nor in tradition when these are viewed holistically. They believe that categorical condemnation of any specific type of sexual act misplaces the concern of the Bible, gospel and tradition, which concern they see instead as centered upon personal and communal "creative growth toward integration." The question to ask, therefore, is not whether a specific behavior is right or wrong in itself but what role it plays in the growth of the person toward self-integration and (very important) the integration of society.

The criterion of "creative growth toward integration" is worked out by the authors with reference to recent Catholic promulgations about sex, especially the *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* adopted by Vatican II. However, this criterion also informs the approach to Scripture and tradition with which the book begins.

Not a treatise for specialists, but rather a work attempting a comprehensive and provocative overview, the book starts with a brief (26 pp.) summary of what the Bible has to teach us about sexuality. The major concern here is to ward off a legalistic use of Scripture by (a) considering all passages within their socio-historical context, and (b) showing that the overriding interest of the biblical writers, when they speak of sex, is concern for the oppressed, which concern is expressed according to the social conditions of the time and the then-prevailing ideas of justice. Anyone who thinks that "social conditions" should not influence sexual ethics, or that ideas of justice should everywhere be the same, will be offended by this kind of reasoning. The Bible is here seen as the record of a dynamic process in which "the law of the heart" gradually emerges from a ritualistic and then

legalistic shell. Jesus' own statements against divorce and adultery, and in praise of those who become "eunuchs for the Kingdom of God," are also seen in this light, as are the apparently anti-sexual passages in Paul.

A second short chapter (20 pp.) is devoted to Christian (mostly Catholic) tradition. Here the same dynamic view obtains. The authors treat Augustine ambiguously, although their later references to him all speak of his "pessimism" and his "rigoristic" stance. The major damage to moral theology is found after (not because of) Thomas Aquinas, especially in Occam and the minor scholastics. Of most help is the discussion of church pronouncements in the 20th century. Throughout, the authors are less concerned with the particular rules and advice given by moralists than with the reasoning behind them, an attitude both theological and charitable.

From Scripture and tradition, the book turns to a rapid review (25 pp.) of what contemporary empirical research has to say about sexual behavior. While much is known about behavior patterns in our society, very little is known scientifically about their consequences for individuals and communities.

The authors then proceed to a theology of sexuality. Again brief (21 pp.), this chapter is the core of the book. It defines sexuality in a simple yet broad way, which I think is wise: "We would, therefore, define human sexuality simply as the way of being in, and relating to, the world as a *male* or *female* person" (p. 82). In such a definition, the emphasis rightly falls on (a) self as finite body, (b) relationship to all that is not one's self, (c) gender and (d) sexuality as a way of life rather than as a given substance. Once again, the view here is dynamic. As such, it encourages reflection upon responsibility and creativity.

Seeking a Standard

What, then, may be a valid Christian ethical criterion for evaluating sexual choices within the dynamic field? The criterion must not be a legal absolute, for that would constitute a heteronomous, unchanging authority at odds with the dynamic character of the person. It would be, in the end, inimical to the "law of the heart." The authors find their clue in the *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* issued by Vatican II in 1965.

When that document was written, Catholic thought had already come to see that marital sex had two valid purposes—not only the procreation of children (the only good Augustine and many others had seen in it) but also the creation and nurture of bonds of love between spouses. These are usually referred to as the procreative and the unitive purposes of sex. By 1965,

the Catholic Church was also coming to say that these two functions of human sex are of equal value: The unitive end need not be thought secondary to the procreative.

Vatican II strengthened this idea and enunciated a concept under which the two purposes might be integrated. It recommended primary attention to "the nature of the human person and his [sic] acts." This line of thought was pursued ten years later in a *Declaration Concerning Sexual Ethics* made by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Although the *Declaration* does not please our authors with its "absolute and immutable prescriptions regarding particular actions," it does extend in principle the insights of Vatican II so as to make them applicable to areas of human sexuality outside of marriage.

Given these developments, the authors of *Human Sexuality* take the opportunity to recast the principle recommended by Vatican II into a more substantial form. Understanding "the nature of the human person" to be dynamic, and mindful of the ministry of Jesus, they propose "to broaden the traditional formulation of the purpose of sexuality from *procreative and unitive* to *creative and integrative*" (p. 86). This purpose is further refined as "creative growth toward integration" (p. 82, *passim*).

In the fifth and final chapter, which occupies over half the book, the authors present pastoral guidelines for the counseling of persons on such matters as contraception, premarital and non-marital sex, celibacy, homosexuality, masturbation and more. I will not review this part of the book. Suffice it to say that we have here a subtle and non-legalistic application, in every case, of the general criterion of "creative growth toward integration." The guidelines offered will infuriate everyone opposed to "permissiveness." They will aid those who are trying to find their way, and they will bore all sophisticates who imagine themselves to be already on the other side of Jordan.

The authors have no intention of encouraging anyone to fall into a self-indulgent subjectivism. Their principle of integration does *not* mean merely suiting oneself. It does not even mean working out an essentially private relation with a consenting partner or spouse. It means integration into the family of God by way of society and the communion of saints, the self growing in wholeness as it grows in responsible love for others. The basic insight—which I think ought to be broadcast for all to hear—is that, in creating us sexual, God has given us the means of entry into communion of souls. We may abuse this gift by wasting it upon shortsighted pleasure, which leads to self-alienation and scorn for others. We may also abuse it by denying its primacy, vainly hoping to

achieve blessedness by negative legalisms that stem from a fundamentally mistaken asceticism.

Unanswered Questions

Two major questions grew on me as I read this book. Pondering them has induced the sadness I mentioned above, in spite of the good I expect this significant book to accomplish. How far we have yet to go! Perhaps the Christian religion cannot go that far, cannot believe in its heart that sex is more and better than a divine concession to finitude.

The first of my questions occurred when I noticed that the book's index has seven entries, including a whole subchapter, for masturbation and none at all for orgasm. I found the word orgasm only once in the text, and this in a quotation (p. 103) from a libertarian writer of whom the authors do not approve. Otherwise, I found a few references to "venereal pleasure" (a traditional expression), and some passing mentions of climax. Is this paucity of reference important? I am afraid it is.

Almost all Christian literature is conspicuously silent about orgasm, unlike the literature of psychology and art. Christian literature takes orgasm for granted. Approaching this mystery, it turns away or skips on. I take this to be a sign that Christianity, even where it is most earthy and liberal, cannot imagine what to make of the qualitative intensity of deep



If Your Friends Are Like You

—and some of them surely are—then it seems altogether likely that you will please them by choosing C&C subscriptions as Christmas gifts. It's a gift appropriate to the season that will serve your friends the year 'round. Moreover, it's quick and easy—and if you give more than one subscription, you can take advantage of special rates.

(1) The first gift subscription is at our regular rate (\$12). All *additional* gifts are priced at \$9—a 25% saving.

(2) If you give at least three gift subscriptions, the fourth can be a gift to yourself: a full year's renewal at the special Christmas rate.

If you act promptly, a handsome hand-signed card will announce your gift before Christmas. Please send your order, with your check, to: Christianity and Crisis, Dept. X, 537 West 121st Street, New York, N. Y. 10027.

sexual experience. To be sure, Christianity often has borrowed the language of erotic love to speak of mystical experiences of God. But it seems not able—or perhaps fundamentally unwilling—to baptize orgasm with explicit recognition of its form and teleological power. It is as if Christianity, insofar as it does concern itself with the specifics of sex, is fixated upon vaginal entry and the disposal of semen. This is nothing but sexual immaturity, and I wonder if the church can ever grow beyond it.

For us to remain Christian, is it necessary that we leave the acme of sexual experience to those we call pagan? What has Christianity to do with sensual ecstasy? From the early Church Fathers until quite recently the answer was clear: nothing at all, except to avoid it if possible. Today we don't say that. But we don't say anything else, either. Have we gone as far as we can go? Is this where Yahweh and Aphrodite must part? And if such dualism be our destiny, what then shall become of the principle of "creative growth toward integration"?

I am concerned about the pastoral as well as the theological silence regarding orgasm. For all its interest in growth, *Human Sexuality* says nothing about growth toward orgasmic capacity, although this subject looms large in modern psychology. The authors write (perhaps unintentionally) as if growth in sexual matters had only to do with character, morals and love, not with sexual capacity. This is an old and mistaken story. The church has thought that sex is but a natural force needing the restrictions and guidance of morality. In fact, most of human sexuality (like the rest of our behaviors) is a learned capacity and needs cultivation by precept and experience. The church's greatest failure in this matter has been its refusal to nurture the sexual development of its members. Such a concern has seemed to it unnecessary at best, pagan or Caananite at worst. The result is the totally irreligious sex that has plagued our history and is prevalent today.

My other major question, which also strikes deep, may be put very simply: What about Jesus? Our authors insist that their approach is informed throughout by an anthropology drawn from the example of humanity in Jesus. I would like to believe it, but I don't see how. Here is their one full paragraph on the matter:

From this point of view, sexuality is not elevated into a good in itself nor repressed as somehow tainted with guilt. Sex is rather to be accepted as all other characteristics of humanness and used to facilitate human growth to full maturity. For Christian men and women, this call to full maturity takes on an added dimension inasmuch as we see ourselves as called to growth in Christ, our model. Jesus realized himself fully as a human person and

spent his life reaching out to others. His disciples then model their lives after him, "building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:12-13). This growth, both intrapersonal and interpersonal, takes place in a sexual person, incomplete in self but reaching toward "fullness" in Christ. It is from this distinctly Christian anthropological perspective that we define and approach the entire question of human sexuality.

That is all very well, but what are we to imagine? That Jesus was a sexual person like unto us who lived a celibate life? No doubt this is what our authors mean. Can it follow, then, that the celibacy of Jesus implies no value judgment concerning the superiority of the celibate state? But the whole Catholic tradition has said that Jesus' celibacy does imply such a value. Can the Christian church un-write 2000 years of history? And even if it can, does it then remain the Christian church, or does it become something else?

I once wrote an article about the problem of Jesus' sexuality (*Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, v. 20, March 1965), and I am no longer satisfied with what I wrote. William Phipps picked up where I left off and argued that Jesus was in fact not celibate (*Was Jesus Married?* Harper and Row, 1970). However, the dilemma remains as it was. Christianity has never entertained the image of a Christ who shared the sexual experience of most of the human race. Hence that experience is rendered suspect, to say the least. If we now try to see sex as a good gift of God, as something properly writ into our pre-fallen constitutions, the image of the celibate Jesus looms up to haunt us. If God meant us to fall in love with each other and to lie down together in marriage beds—which is, after all, a rather fundamental matter—why in heaven does his incarnation, not to speak of his Son's conception, have nothing to do with this?

If there shall be a Christian theological solution for this dilemma, it surely lies in the realm of eschatology. Jesus' eschatological expectation, that of his contemporaries and the New Testament, was not the same as ours? We have to come to terms with that discrepancy before any of Jesus' modeling of humanity can be seen aright. The authors of *Human Sexuality* are aware of this, as a few brief sentences show. I wish they had said more about it. Anyway, I think a doctrine of sex in the light of eschatology is the next step to be taken.

For too long, the question Christian moralists have asked about sex is, what shall we not do? The real question to ask, about sex as about all other ethical matters, is: For what may we hope?

It is well to speak of sex as the gateway to love. We need to go further. We need to see that sex is also the most humane of all the gateways that open us toward hope. □

Two Rousing Cheers

Joe Cunneen

THE PUBLICATION OF *Human Sexuality* is probably a good example of an occasion when a non-expert response, spontaneous and perhaps even disorganized, may have a special justification. Although the book is not aimed at a popular audience, its essentially pastoral orientation is governed by assumptions as to what kind of guidance the American Catholic community most needs in sexual matters. And despite my lack of theological degrees, in view of the training I received in an earlier American Catholic approach to sexuality I can at least offer myself as Exhibit A, the middle-aged, sexually-unliberated Irish-American Jesuit, precisely the type that the authors of the present study are trying to render obsolete.

I have vivid memories of the way in which ethics classes at my all-male Catholic college collapsed into consideration of the near-mathematical question, "How far can you go with a girl?"—i.e., without committing a mortal sin. Since then there have been disturbing reminders of the traumas induced in members of my generation by our teachers' insistence on the serious and automatic guilt of masturbation, of any expression of genital sexuality outside of marriage, and of any use of contraceptives, even by married people. So it is hard for me not to celebrate *Human Sexuality* as a courageous and long-overdue achievement. Any fair reading of the text will make clear that its authors are moderates in their approach to theological ethics, and that they are concerned to preserve a continuity in Catholic teaching even while presenting a more contemporary person-oriented rather than an act-oriented approach to sexuality.

Of course, those unfamiliar with contemporary biblical criticism may at first be troubled. "In view of the weight of contrary historical evidence," the authors state near the conclusion of their chapter on "The Bible and Human Sexuality," "anyone who maintains that the Bible absolutely forbids certain forms of sexual behavior, regardless of circumstances, must likewise bear the burden of proof." But a careful reading of their entire text shows that the attack is not on the normative value of Scripture but on the illegitimate use of absolutes in moral theology and on the practice of pulling convenient quotations out of the Bible to support one's own prejudices. In short, the target is not St. Paul but Anita Bryant!

What *Human Sexuality* is saying in general, therefore, is something that most (certainly not all) of the Catholics of my age (54) are probably predisposed to

applaud, even if they may occasionally find the prose style obscure and the argumentation elusive. Like the authors of the book, they suffered from an excessively negative approach to sexuality that was ultimately more Irish-American than traditional. They are tired of feeling guilty. Of course, even in the naïveté of my repressed adolescence I was vaguely aware that something was not quite right. I wouldn't have known how to formulate it at the time, but I had an unconscious sense that choleric sermons were not the expression of genuine chastity.

Still, there was always the feeling that there was some truly wise man or woman who joyously lived the kind of sublimated sexuality that I was encouraged to emulate. The authors of *Human Sexuality* would describe the object of my search as someone who had used his/her sexuality in accordance with its intrinsic purpose of fostering "a creative growth toward integration"; I was thinking vaguely of a jolly but deeply prayerful Benedictine. Despite the youthful romanticism of my attitude, there was at least the recognition that I needed some form of spiritual direction; but now I also perceive an implicit irresponsibility—the hope of finding "an answer man"—in my approach to ethical decisions. Today, with a greater awareness of the way in which we all are inclined to find "good reasons" to justify our often egocentric choices, and with the recognition of my predisposition to approve the general thrust of *Human Sexuality*, it is perhaps useful to warn against turning the book's five authors into some kind of collective and very up-to-date "jolly Benedictine."

No Precedents

My guess is that the authors themselves would be the first to agree. They have taken on an important task, for which there was no exact precedent; what they were asked to produce was neither a theological treatise nor an ethics textbook. Further, the difficulties of producing a book by committee can hardly be exaggerated.

It needs to be remembered also that this particular book enters into a political-pastoral situation in which polarization is all too likely. Human sexuality is an area where, for cultural-historical reasons, even the more intelligent and pastorally oriented of the bishops will find it hard to initiate change—and where the less intelligent and more hidebound will find it easy to condemn the slightest movement toward change. When denunciations roll forth (as they already have),

JOE CUNNEEN is the editor of *Cross Currents* and teaches English and religion at Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.

those who understand how much the American Catholic community needs this kind of effort will be tempted to join in simplistic confrontations, defining the authors as the good guys, its critics as the enemy.

The temptation should be resisted. Not all the reservations expressed about *Human Sexuality* can be dismissed as evidence of a surviving Jansenistic mentality. We do crucially need to develop a more mature approach to ethical decision-making in the American Catholic (and broader Christian) community. While that process goes on I want to keep remembering that on this subject there is a mote in my eye and, I must assume, in the eyes of the five authors of the book and of practically all who will read it.

So it is that though intemperate attacks call for response, it is to everyone's advantage that the theological methods followed in *Human Sexuality* are criticized by the authors' peers. And it's not a bad thing that some of the rest of us are tempted to good-natured parody when we read the authors' criteria for evaluating sexual behavior: Is it "self-liberating, other-enriching, honest, faithful, socially responsible, life-serving and joyous"? One foresees a questionnaire in every bedroom.

This last suggests an aspect of *Human Sexuality* which many may obscurely sense as they read the book but will find difficult to formulate as a criticism, since it may not exactly be a rejection of any major thesis in the book. Perhaps the authors are the unwitting victims of their assigned subjects, but the cumulative impact of their insistence on the pervasiveness of sexuality should precisely remind us of the biblical prohibitions against the tyranny, even the divinization, of sex in the surrounding culture. When they write that today "sex is seen as a force that permeates, influences, and affects every act of a person's being at every moment of existence," they may feel they are merely summarizing freshman-level psychology, but I find it either an example of empty verbiage or a statement that should make even a non-conservative Christian pause. To the extent that sex is pervading everything human in our society, is it a force for liberation or enslavement?

I may not know how to formulate my concern well enough to avoid the suspicion that I am ignoring Freudianism or modern psychology's appreciation of the unconscious. Yet I do not feel that my psychoanalytical friends would be satisfied with the presentation of sexuality that runs through the study. They would surely be amused to find that Freud was more concerned than Catholic theologians with the necessity of sublimation, a concept that does not appear in the book's index. A sentence like "Married or celibate Christians must be encouraged to remain open to and conscious of their continuing sexual interest in all bodily existences" seems both a ludicrous example of what D. H. Lawrence called "sex in the head" and an indication of excessive preoccupation with the special problems of celibacy among Catholic priests and religious.

What I found most disappointing in the book was the absence of any sustained attempt to relate the findings of the empirical sciences with any kind of Christian framework. Also missing and, in my view, badly needed, is an adequate discussion of the connection between exploitative capitalism and the

dehumanizing commercialization of sex. Yes, men and women of my generation still need to be reminded that their sexuality is one of the supreme gifts of their Creator. But my undergraduate level students need another kind of help if they are to perceive the ways in which sex is constantly being sold to them as one more consumer product. They need also to be shown the many ways in which a none-too-subtle social coercion encourages a quantitative search for pleasure. The absence of this emphasis points to a special problem of the newly enlightened American Catholic dealing with sexuality: Because we undervalued sex for so many generations, we may now be less critical than we should be of the latter-day descendants of Dr. Feelgood.

Tiger into Kitten

The authors of this book suffer under a still more specialized limitation. Perhaps the most telling indication of their clerical background, leading to a degree of unrealism, is the implicit but persistent assumption that there is some easy formula for taming sex. Their oft-repeated phrase, "wholesome human sexuality," hardly offers the complex awareness Paul Ricoeur suggested when he entitled an article on sexuality "Wonder, Eroticism and Enigma" (*Cross Currents*, Spring 1964).

What may also reflect a too-great swing of the pendulum is the treatment (or non-treatment) of Jesus' sexuality. There was something close to Docetism in the popular piety of not so long ago, in its inability to give full acceptance to Jesus' complete humanity. Of course, like this reviewer, the authors of *Human Sexuality* suffered from highly unhelpful sermons offering the Holy Family as an all-purpose model for all Catholic families. But it is disappointing that they couldn't have reminded us that the "imitation" of the saints or of Jesus was never meant in any naively literal sense, and that the traditional Catholic assumption of Jesus' celibacy, instead of being seen as deriving from some sort of hostility toward or devaluation of sex, can best have meaning for us as a sign of liberation from the potentially all-consuming claims of a never-to-be-domesticated power.

Speaking of realism, in the discussion of sex there is a place for prosy pedestrianism as well as high-flying ecstasy. I am quite ready to wax lyrical about marriage, for example (though usually only in private situations), but is it either unrealistic or life-denying to keep in mind as well its traditional function as a "remedy for concupiscence"? And, if sex is an invitation to continue God's work of creation (most obviously through procreation, which is understandably but perhaps excessively minimized in this book), in practice it is also a reminder of our role as cosmic clowns, so that proper meditation on its meaning should help us not to take ourselves, or our sins, too seriously.

A Syriac story of a monk who fell into fornication provides a helpful corrective to our Irish Jansenist emphasis on sexual sins as more evil than sins against justice and charity. It seems the monk was "too embarrassed" to tell anyone about it, and went off into the wilds, howling and screaming in his distress. An elderly recluse whom he disturbed came out to see

what all the fuss was for. When eventually the monk was persuaded to confess his sin of fornication, the old man replied: "Is that all? I thought they must have made you bursar or something, and that you had pocketed the cash!" (Budge, *Paradise of the Holy Fathers*, 1, 602).

What I am saying, I suppose, is that the authors of *Human Sexuality* deserve a salute for what they have

attempted, and two cheers for what they have achieved. Even if their book does not seem to me a great work of theology or the richly human, poetic and humorous book on sex that I would prefer, it can still accomplish a great deal of good. The best way of judging it and using it, however, is to keep always in mind where the American Catholic community which produced it is coming from. □

The 'Free Market' Myth: Fatal Trap for Farmers

Shirley E. Greene and Richard W. Priggie

"Farmers want to be free."

"We don't want to be told what to do—even if we might want to do it."

"We sweat and beg and pray to make a crop, but someone else makes the profit."

"Somebody has got us by the throat. We'd like to break the cycle but the system won't allow it."

These are direct quotes from family farmers participating in a pair of Farm and Food Issues Consultations last winter in Omaha and Louisville. With blunt clarity they state the central dilemma that has beset the American family farm for at least 50 years.

Farmers do indeed want to be free. They cherish the open style of life on their own acres in the countryside; the privacy of the farmstead; the privilege of making their own daily schedules of work and of relaxation; of deciding for themselves what and when to plant; the freedom to operate their acres and their livestock as they will; the right to sell their product when and where they choose.

In 1920 almost 6.5 million US farm families enjoyed these rights and freedoms. Over the following 25 years this number was reduced to just under six million, a decline of about 7.5 percent. But in the 30 years between 1945 and 1975 the number dropped to about 2,750,000, a reduction of more than 50 percent.

Why is this happening? Oddly enough, the *motives* for the departure of so many families from their fields have been little investigated by agricultural economists and rural sociologists; it is an aspect of American agriculture that has been little studied. It is known that many family farm units were consolidated with others as their operators reached retirement age

without heirs, or without heirs who wanted to continue in farming. Some farmers have opted for other vocations, or for life in the city. But anyone who has followed the fortunes of farmers over the past 30 years knows that a high proportion of those three million farm families have left the land not from choice but out of economic necessity.

One statistic is available: Of the small farmers with less than \$20,000 gross annual sales who have moved out of that category over the past 15 years, one-third increased their sales over that figure. The other two-thirds were forced out of business by bankruptcy. And the trend goes on. This year's oversupply of wheat and corn in relation to effective demand will bring financial failure to many more farm families. An April 1977 US Department of Agriculture (USDA) survey of 400 bankers in the nine major Midwestern agricultural states found that a third of the farmers in those states face either total bankruptcy or liquidation of some assets to pay off debts.

Or, as the farmers told us in Omaha and Louisville, "Someone has got us by the throat." Farmers know that their pursuit of a free way of life can and often does end in strangulation by economics. To understand this harsh reality one needs to be reminded of the fundamental nature of the law of supply and demand. Reduced to barebones simplicity, it goes like this: In a free market, as long as demand remains steady, increasing supply means decreasing price.

How does this simple formula work in agriculture? Beginning much earlier but accelerating since World War II, American agriculture has undergone an unprecedented technological revolution. Mechanization, irrigation, hybrid seed, fertilizers, insecticides and other mechanical, chemical and biological innovations have enormously increased the productivity of our farms. As a result supply has persistently outrun effective demand, except in time of war, for the past 50 years or more. This does not mean that we have more food than is needed to feed the hungry of the world. The free market is not interested in *need*; only in *effective* demand, i.e., only in people with the money to pay.

SHIRLEY E. GREENE is national coordinator of WHEAT (World Hunger Education and Action Together). He lives in Laramie, Wyo., following retirement from the United Church Board for World Ministries.

RICHARD W. PRIGGIE, formerly in the Office for Governmental Affairs of the Lutheran Council in the USA, Washington, D.C., recently entered Wesley Theological Seminary for further study.

Ed. Note: A summary report of the Farm and Food Issues Consultations mentioned in this article may be obtained for \$1 from the Working Group on Domestic Hunger & Poverty, Rm. 564, 475 Riverside Dr., NYC 10027.

In a free market, therefore, farmers have been the victims of their own success. Their ability to produce "enough and to spare" has become a weapon turned against them, a constant downward pressure on the prices they receive. Recognizing this pressure, farm organizations across the country and the farm bloc in Congress, as early as the 1930's, developed a concept of *parity*, defined as an equitable ratio between the production expenses farmers have to pay and the prices they receive. Legislation was passed designed to support farm prices at some reasonably high percentage of "parity."

Despite weaknesses in this legislation, some of which will be touched on later, recent studies have indicated that it did serve to keep a good many family farms from dying of the strangulation mentioned by our Omaha/Louisville consultants. A USDA study in 1975 concluded that if American farmers are left to the vicissitudes of the free market with no income protection, another 1½ million family farms will disappear by 1985. And of those farmers remaining, only nine percent would be full owners of their land compared to one-third who are full owners today.

In the early years of the great technological revolution in agriculture few farmers understood the nature of the free market and its pressures. They learned the cruel facts of economic life when it was too late. Today's farmers, judging by the sample group gathered in the Omaha/Louisville consultations, are wiser. They do understand that the system is stacked against them. What they apparently have not yet understood and stubbornly refuse to face is the radical conflict between their commitment to the free market and their economic survival.

Their struggle with this dilemma during the consultations was fascinating to watch. Again and again groups in discussion accurately identified the problem as lack of market power. They described and illustrated how they found themselves caught in a seller's market whenever they went to buy equipment, seed, chemicals or other farm production inputs, and in a buyer's market whenever they had crops or livestock to sell. They repeatedly identified "agribusiness"—implement, seed and chemical companies on the supply side and grain companies, packing-houses and other processors on the demand side—as the enemy. They correctly recognized and named their economic situation as a "cost-price squeeze."

In several cases the consultation participants went even further. They accurately delineated the only two lines of solution available to them within the framework of a private enterprise economy: (a) governmental intervention to protect farmers from the harsh winds of the so-called "free market"; or (b) farmers' organizations, either with or without direct linkage to consumer organizations, strong enough to exercise countervailing market power against the concentrated forces of agribusiness.

Having clearly identified their problem and correctly named the possible solutions, however, most of the participants rejected the solutions. We don't want governmental intervention (they said) because it means infringement on our freedom. Nor can we count on farmers to agree to the voluntary curtailment of their freedom that is required for successful market bargaining operations. In short, we know the disease;

we know the cure; but we won't take the medicine. One listens and wonders: Is "suicide" too strong a word?

One is led at this point to two further questions: Is the family farm worth saving? Why do farmers persistently act and vote against their own survival interests?

On the first question, there are agricultural economists who believe that the "shift of human resources out of agriculture," as the jargon has it, is good for the national economy—this despite recent persistent high rates of urban unemployment. The farmers at our two consultations would not agree. All but unanimously, they hold that it is better for the economy and for the nation to continue a dispersed control of US agriculture among a relatively large number of independent farmers, rather than giving over control into the hands of a few very large farmers, individual investors or non-farm corporations.

Reasons for a Rescue

Values of the family farm recognized by the consultative group can be summarized as follows:

(1) *Efficiency.* Though most Americans assume that bigness in agriculture must be more efficient, a 1967 USDA report concluded that "maximum efficiency generally is achieved at a relatively small size of operation and remains more or less constant through the very large size range."

(2) *Cost of food.* Evidence suggests that consumers are in some cases already paying higher food prices as a direct result of a lack of competition in the food industry. A 1972 Federal Trade Commission study revealed that anti-competitive techniques within 13 food industries alone resulted in consumers being over-charged by \$2.1 billion in that year.

(3) *Rural development.* Earl O. Heady, an Iowa State University economist, has summarized the adverse effects of increasing concentration in control of US agriculture upon the fabric of rural American communities:

With the decline in the farm population the demand for goods and services of businesses in country towns has been eroded. Employment and income opportunities in typical rural communities have therefore declined markedly. As people migrated out of the rural communities, there were fewer people left to participate in the schools, medical facilities and other institutions. With the lessened demand such services retreated in quantity and quality and advanced in cost.

Dr. Walter Goldschmidt of UCLA conducted in 1946 what is still regarded as the most authoritative comparative analysis of community development in corporate vs. family farming areas. Dr. Goldschmidt first identified two California communities, Dinuba and Arvin, which were remarkably alike in size, natural resources and access to markets, but with one significant difference: Dinuba was surrounded by family farms and Arvin was set in the midst of huge corporate "plantations." The study determined that Dinuba surpassed Arvin in all categories of community life:

—Dinuba had 62 separate business establishments; Arvin had 35.

—Dinuba had \$4.4 million in retail trade in a 12-month period; Arvin had \$2.6 million.

—Dinuba had four elementary schools and one high school; Arvin had only one elementary school.

—Dinuba had three parks; Arvin had one playground, loaned by a corporation.

—Dinuba had twice as many churches as did Arvin.

—Dinuba had twice as many organizations for civic improvement and social recreation as did Arvin.

In sum, both the quality of life and the standard of living were far superior in Dinuba than in Arvin.

(4) *Stewardship of the land.* As control of US agriculture has been concentrated among fewer, larger and more mechanized farmers, the natural resources upon which our agriculture depends have been increasingly misused. USDA has estimated that two-thirds of American cropland is being farmed with destructive soil conservation practices. Iowa has lost one-half of its topsoil due to erosion. As a result of over-irrigation in such states as Nebraska and California, underground water tables have declined far beyond their capacity to be replenished.

Recognizing these values so clearly, why do so many farmers persist in opposition to institutional arrangements by which the family farm might be preserved and protected for generations to come?

The answer seems clear. What we see here is an almost classic example of the power—in this case, the suicidal power—of a malevolent myth. Farmers are hypnotized by the myth of the “free market.” Despite their own experience to the contrary, despite their perception of the unfairness of their bargaining situation, they still believe that the market system is the most efficient way of producing and distributing the food we need, the most equitable way of sharing out the returns. Knowing all the premises that point to an opposite conclusion, they continue to give reverence and practical support to the myth.

The power of this myth points to the power of inherited ideas constantly reinforced by slogans. Most of the weekly and monthly farm journals, subsidized as they are by advertising from agribusiness, constantly repeat the free market message. In its publications and throughout its educational programs, the American Farm Bureau Federation, largest of the nation's general farm organizations, constantly repeats the same gospel. (“Gospel” is the word of choice. In a debate several years ago with one of the authors of this article, a former AFBF president referred repeatedly to the “God-given law of supply and demand.”) So also in politics. For reasons mysterious to us, the Republican party retains the allegiance of most family farmers, at least across the northern, midwestern and upper Great Plains sections of the nation. When out of office, the Republicans insistently preach the doctrine of the free market for farmers. When they gain office, they put it into rigorous practice.

All these forces of propaganda especially directed at the farmer supplement the general uncritical acceptance of the free enterprise system by the mass media and the political leadership of the nation. Understandably, family farmers come to confuse their commitment to the kinds of personal freedom and

self-determination mentioned in the early paragraphs of this article with their loyalty to an abstraction called the “free market.”

The Real Market

Let us now turn to a consideration of the reality behind the myth.

First, we haven't had a free market in major agricultural commodities for at least 50 years. Ever since Congress passed the Federal Farm Board legislation in 1929, during the Republican Administration of Herbert Hoover, the government has been involved in the processes of farm marketing. Moving from the Farm Board scheme which was designed to bolster farm prices without regulating farm production (and consequently quickly became a fiasco) into the AAA program of Roosevelt New Deal days, the Federal government has continued to exert an influence on the marketing and pricing of farm commodities through at least four decades. In recent years, thanks to the free market philosophy of Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Earl Butz, the basic farm legislation has been so diluted that although target prices and support loan mechanisms are on the books they have been generally pegged below market prices and consequently are inoperative. On the other hand, governmental intervention in relation to foreign sales, embargoes, import restrictions, etc., have kept the government very much in the farm marketing picture.

So, any American farmer under 50 years of age who talks about a free market, i.e., a market free of governmental intervention, is talking about something he or she has never actually experienced.

Second, leaving aside all governmental intervention, the market for agricultural products over the last half century has never been more than a caricature of the classical model of a free market. Any careful economist will tell you that for effective and equitable operation of a free market three basic conditions must be met:

- (1) There must be a relatively large number of relatively small operators on both the selling and buying sides of the bargaining counter.

- (2) All parties involved must have full information regarding the conditions of supply and of demand.

- (3) The suppliers must be able to get into and out of production rapidly in response to shifts in demand as reflected in shifts in price.

A close look at the agricultural market will reveal that not one of these conditions prevails. Family farmers, mostly relatively small and numbering in the millions, are at the mercy of a few large corporations both at the time they purchase inputs and when they sell their products.

Many important farm input industries are oligopolies, that is, industries in which four firms control more than 50 percent of the market for a particular product. For example, the four largest firms control 83 percent of the tractor market; 74 percent of agricultural chemical sales; and 67 percent of farm petroleum products. The Federal Trade Commission found that in 1972 farmers were overcharged \$251 million because of lack of competition among farm machinery suppliers and \$200 million because of

anti-competitive practices in the animal feed industry. The situation is just as bleak when one turns to the markets on which the farmer must sell his products. Six multinational grain companies, for example, handle at least 70 percent of all US grain exports.

As for the availability of full information, despite various crop and marketing reporting services provided by the USDA, the average family farmer has far less information on market conditions at the time he/she has a product to sell than is available to the giant corporations on the other side of the bargaining counter. A classic case of this disparity was the first huge Russian grain deal of a few years ago, when the grain companies made enormous windfall profits at the expense of farmers because they had advance inside information regarding the Russian intention to buy. In Oklahoma alone, the withholding of information by the USDA cost wheat farmers some \$47 million. At the same time, in the five months surrounding the Russian grain deal, five top USDA grain administrators either came from or moved to employment by four of the six major grain companies.

Finally, on the matter of flexibility of movement in and out of production, farmers are under severe constraints. Because of the long lead time required from planting until harvest of field crops and even longer times required for the breeding and maturing of livestock or the growing of a fruit orchard, it is not possible for the farmer to tailor production promptly and accurately to the demand situation.

The result of all these impediments is that the free market has rarely been friendly to farmers. The exceptions have been during war time when demand soars and during two or three years of the early 1970's when severe weather conditions in Africa and parts of Asia, plus heavy Russian grain purchases, precipitated American farmers into a temporary sellers' market.

Undoubtedly this recent brief period of favorable farm prices has strongly reinforced the free market myth in the minds of many family farmers. Actually, however, as of 1976-77 we are already back in a situation of wildly fluctuating farm prices and strong downward pressure on many of them. As predicted in the 1975 USDA study cited earlier, we can look for another heavy crop of farm bankruptcy sales if farmers get what they seemed to be asking for in Omaha and Louisville—the freedom to go broke.

What Kind of Freedom?

The reality of the free market, then, is that it has no necessary connection with the basic freedom the family farmer seeks. That freedom is not easily defined, but it is nevertheless a real value. It has to do with the freedom of broad acres and open space, the freedom to set one's own schedule and pace of work, the freedom to plan together as a whole family for the organization of work, the distribution of work load and the use of leisure. These are freedoms that differentiate the farmer from the factory or office worker; they are genuine and precious values which the family farmer rightly cherishes.

Unfortunately, in the kind of highly concentrated economy that has evolved under American capitalism, adherence to a so-called free market for

agricultural commodities is no guarantee of the preservation of these more basic freedoms. On the contrary, as millions of farm families have learned to their sorrow, such a misplaced loyalty may be a principal factor in depriving the family of the possibility of continuing that life of freedom. Or, as one of the small groups in the Omaha/Louisville consultations asserted:

This group feels that our "free enterprise" system produces a vast concentration of power and wealth which results in destructive tendencies. Wealth and power seem to force people to destroy others in the effort to increase their holdings, that is, to become more wealthy and powerful. . . .

What role can and should the churches play in helping family farmers deal with the dilemma of freedom vs. economic survival? Several denominations have been responding in one way or another to pressures from their farm constituencies. Farmers, complaining that nobody really listens to them or understands their problems, have been seeking an audience wherever they can find one. In a number of cases their churches have responded. For example, the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, the Church of the Brethren and the United Methodist Church have mounted projects designed to hear the views of family farmers and to study their problems. The United Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Christ have similar review and study processes underway. The Roman Catholics through the National Catholic Rural Life Conference have given consistent attention to these issues for many years.

To a considerable degree all these efforts are oriented to the concept of "listening to the farmers." As the first step in a process, listening can hardly be faulted. Invariably, however, what the churches hear from the farmers with respect to the crucial economic sector is a playback of the myth of the free market, the same message we heard in Omaha and Louisville.

Though listening is essential, listening is not enough—especially if it implies accepting from farmers the ideology of a system that is destroying the family farm. This would merely cater to and enhance the suicidal tendencies of family farmers. Instead, we urge churches and church agencies, both denominational and ecumenical, to undertake continuing educational programs with their farmer members on the true nature of the free market and its dangerous effects on family farming.

Such an effort should also include careful exploration of the orientation and impact of various governmental programs affecting the family farmer. Not just any kind of governmental intervention is good enough.

Boosting Bigness

Despite pious political rhetoric, and even despite the good intentions of some policymakers, many government programs have contributed to greater concentration of control of US agriculture. Because most income and price support payments are based on volume and acreage, for example, they put a premium

on bigness and simply consolidate the financial strength of those least in need. Congress this year once again declined to place a meaningful limitation on the amount of federal price support payments any one producer may receive.

Tax policy furnishes another illustration. Declares Philip Raup, University of Minnesota agricultural economist, "Tax policy has attracted non-farm capital into farming to an extent that defeats any attempt to argue the case for corporate or large-scale farming on the basis of conventional tests of efficiency or economies of size." Capital gains provisions and the opportunity for non-farm investors to use farm losses to offset non-farm income have provided additional incentives for non-farm entry into agriculture.

Research and extension activities of land grant colleges and universities, funded in part by the Federal government, have also given substantial encouragement to increasing scale in agriculture through an almost unquestioning pursuit of more highly mechanized farm technologies. An August 1975 General Accounting Office report found that only 2.6 percent of the Extension Services' program staff-days were being used for programs specifically designed to assist in improving farm operations of small farm operators. As a former director of USDA's Office of Science and Education recently observed: "When we ask what agricultural research has done for the small farm operators the answer comes back: 'Very little.' In fact, the overall impact of agricultural research has threatened their survival."

In their educational efforts, the churches will do well to link arms with all farm and consumer organizations that understand the threat of the free market and of misguided governmental policies and that offer mechanisms for political and/or economic action to counter the pressure of agribusiness upon the family farmer.

The National Farmers Union, for example, strongly supports a Federal farm program designed to temper the harsh winds of the free market through substantial levels of price and income support. The National Farmers Organization, a relatively young general farm organization, represents the thrust of those farmers who believe that organized market bargaining can strengthen the farmer's position. The Consumer Federation of America also sees clearly the threat of food monopoly both to farm producers and to non-farm consumers.

Denominational agencies seeking to serve the long-term interests of family farmers should also use the resources of two highly competent and effective ecumenical agencies. One is the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027). Through its Eco-Justice Task Force, ICCR is producing excellent studies of the impact of agribusiness on both farm producers and food consumers in the US and abroad.

The other ecumenical agency is the Interreligious Task Force on US Food Policy (110 Maryland Ave, N.E., Washington, D. C. 20002). This coalition of church legislative representatives is producing some extremely insightful studies of family farm economics.

The churches can't save farmers; farmers will have to save themselves. But if church persons are themselves adequately informed, they can help farmers

work free from the mythology that now holds them in thrall. They can encourage the self-respect and disciplined cooperation farmers must develop if they are to realize their potential strength.

There are reasons for the churches to engage in this struggle. One is the simple matter of justice. The prevailing system under which farmers struggle to survive is not less unfair because farmers themselves help to perpetuate it. To raise their consciousness, to help them toward a more sophisticated understanding of how and why they are being manipulated, is an eminently proper Christian undertaking.

Beyond this, the real and basic freedoms farmers cherish are values wholly consonant with both democracy and Christianity. Without romanticizing farm life or idealizing farmers, it is still true that people who love their land and their independence contribute something to society at least as valuable as the commodities they produce. Entrusting food production to corporate agribusiness, to wealthy tax evaders and banking interests creates risks not only for our soil and water, but also for our people. □

A CALL TO REFLECTION

THE "CALL TO CONCERN" published as an ad in the October 3 issue of C&C got instant results with one reader. Concern, yes. Also irritation, not to speak of anger. This piece will be an effort to work out the sources of my displeasure.

It does not rise out of disagreement with the political objectives asserted by the authors and signers of the ad. With them, I agree that a constitutional amendment barring elective abortion would be a near-catastrophe. I do think the ad misstates the issue with regard to Medicaid funding of abortion: It simply ignores the outrage legitimately felt by citizens who are repelled by abortion, but who may be required to pay for it if such funding is approved. On balance, however, I agree with Sidney Callahan (C&C, Sept. 19) that distributive justice should prevail: When women able to pay for abortions can have them legally, poor women who want them should be able to have them.

As for abortion itself, the ad's definition of its meaning is reasonably close to one of the definitions I sometimes accept. Yes, it is a "serious" and "sometimes tragic" procedure (I would say *usually* tragic) which in some circumstances may be "less destructive" than its alternative.

So where is the problem? Why does reading the ad make me unhappy?

In part it is a question of language and strategy. In the ad, for example, people who believe the fetus is

sacred are said to hold an "absolutist" and "extreme" position which is "blind" to all else, unconcerned about the "human consequences" of their position. This is argument by epithet. It is also a case of false labeling. Abortion is a Yes or No question; those who would sanction it are quite as "absolutist" as those who would not. In this context the word is merely a pejorative, denigrating noise.

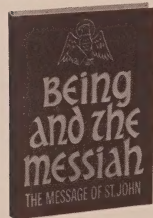
Moreover, "positions" are not "blind," nor do they see; positions cannot "show concern." The ethicists who signed the ad are really talking about people, not about a position; and in a great many cases the phrases they use about the position do not accurately describe the people who hold it. Without quite saying it, the text strongly implies that you have to be a heartless fanatic to believe that non-therapeutic abortion is the unjustified taking of human life. Try applying that to Dorothy Day, or to Father Richard McCormick (C&C, Sept. 19). The truth is that there are excessively single-minded crusaders on both sides of this question. No one knows that better than professional ethicists. No one should be more careful about the choice of terms to define the issue and describe the opposition.

Then there is the paragraph in which the ad deplores the "institutional mobilization" of Roman Catholic dioceses and their "massive financial contributions" on behalf of a Human Life amendment. As everyone knows, my generous support of human freedom is someone else's massive funding of oppression, and my coordinated campaign of conscience

is your deplorable deploying of institutional clout. No denomination or church coalition is immune from this kind of attitudinizing. Bishop-baiting can be a legitimate exercise, as well as a fun sport; but there are rules. In my reading, "A Call to Concern" violates an important rule by suggesting that the Catholic bishops, by acting in a manner wholly in accord with the polity of their church, are doing something subversive. What the ethicists are really angry about ("saddened" in the genteel word) is the *purpose* of the funding—lobbying for the imposition of a law restricting personal behavior in an area on which there is no longer a living consensus. I have no quarrel with that. But when they also attack the *mode* of the funding it changes the whole tone of their proclamation. Maybe it will be useful to them to learn that even a partially alienated son of Rome is tempted to utter a vulgar response on behalf of the bishops.

Probably the authors of "A Call to Concern" felt there was no space in the ad for careful qualifications and that, given the temper of the Congress and the Supreme Court, the situation gives license for polemics. And the signers went along. That's saddening. Teachers of ethics who engage in public controversy should be able to remember that there is an ethics of rhetoric. They should be equipped to demonstrate how to be forceful and persuasive without setting up straw targets, without slanting the position of their opponents, without dragging in extraneous questions. Who else will set a standard? Not Bill Buckley or Evans and Novak; certainly not the meaner spirits among the anti-abortion forces.

New from ORBIS



BEING AND THE MESSIAH

The Message of
Saint John

by Jose Miranda

"Exciting reading, full of original, provocative, highly controversial theses, brilliantly argued." Walter Wink, Auburn Theological Seminary

CIP

Cloth \$8.95, Paper \$4.95

MEDITATIONS ON SAINT LUKE by Arturo Paoli

A searching analysis of the malaise which sets in when we reduce ourselves and others to "economic animals." (Paoli is a follower of Charles de Foucauld and the author of the bestseller *Freedom to be Free*, Orbis 1973)

CIP

Cloth \$8.95, Paper \$4.95

Write for 116-title
catalog



ORBIS BOOKS
Maryknoll, NY 10545

The Costs of Victory

On further reflection, however, I think my problem with the ad goes deeper than language. Apart from rhetoric, the whole struggle over abortion has been characterized by so great a concern for victory that nuances are left aside—to the extent that after victory the winners may well be appalled by what they have wrought. "A Call to Concern" prompts the thought that it may be time to consider consequences.

To hit the bishops first: Surely there are many among them who understand (but are not saying) that helping to ram through a Human Life amendment will violate principles well established in Catholic political tradition. I remember being taught as early as the 10th grade that Prohibition was unsound policy, not because liquor was God's special gift to the Irish but because it put government in the position of enforcing a law which, because its basic premises were so widely rejected, *could not* be enforced. Prohibition, we were told, *necessarily* produced speakeasies, poisonous liquors passing as whiskey, a rich opportunity for organized crime, tommyguns spraying the streets of Chicago, a general contempt for law. That same kind of contempt will be expressed in different but serious ways if the proposed Human Life amendment is passed. The Catholic Church, especially its hierarchy, will get most of the blame. And there will still be a great many abortions. What does it profit a church to gain an amendment to the Constitution if in the process the Constitution loses its vitality, if the very idea of community under law suffers damage?

The problem on the other side of the issue is as serious. The Protestant thinkers who led me to question my once unyielding stand against abortion did the trick by convincing me that there are genuine moral dilemmas in human life; situations in which all the available choices are tinged with guilt, in which the choice is between "more destructive" and "less destructive" options. The language of "A Call to Concern" suggests that this is how its signers view the matter of abortion. I know that some of them most ardently do not want a society that sanctions abortions for such reasons as choosing the gender of offspring. I will hazard the guess that few of them would be willing to characterize the fetus as a mere piece of tissue, and that many would dissent from the view that the issue of abortion turns entirely on the need to defend women's autonomy. If none of them would forbid abortion, few would encourage it, or would welcome a time in which abortion becomes a morally neutral, emotionless, casual procedure.

Still, that is what is happening. In some cities the number of abortions approaches or exceeds the number of live births. One hears women who speak of their abortions as inconveniences, like dental appointments.

What I suggest is that the most reasonable and most sensitive people on both sides of this issue have contributed to this result by permitting themselves to be aligned with simplistic "pro-abortion" and "anti-abortion" crusaders. Those who say "No" to abortion have overreached themselves by their commitment to a Prohibition-style legal approach. Those who say "Sometimes, with sorrow," have in effect subordinated their scruples to the tactics of their allies who say "Yes, why not?" and who, to gain freedom of conscience with respect to abortion, have effectively conveyed the notion that nobody's conscience should ever be troubled by the termination of any pregnancy. The consequence is that we face a choice between coercive social policies: Either the state will punish people for having or procuring abortions, or it will establish abortion officially (through its taxing power) as a morally neutral procedure like an appendectomy.

A Third Choice

Had there been enough foresight and restraint, we might have had a different choice. Two years ago,

writing in these pages (July 21, 1975), Howard Moody said: "The tragedy of the present isolation of Catholic and Protestant groups on the abortion question is that it prevents us from dealing with the important issues. Such issues might provide points on which people who are now enemies can become allies."

Precisely. The best spirits on both sides might have accepted their unresolvable differences on the moral quality of abortion. Having done so, they might have been able to fashion a social policy for presentation in the public forum that would have been supportive of individual freedom while still affirming the seriousness of abortion. Legislative proposals could have been drawn that would enlarge genuine freedom of choice—by providing adequate counseling, for example, and by allotting money not only to fund abortions but to make the other choice really possible. Is such compromise an impossibly idealistic goal? No; something very like it was achieved in Sweden.

Richard Nixon and Vince Lombardi played to win, and neither ever expressed much regret over the consequences. In a Niebuhrian journal it may be silly to express the hope that ethicists and bishops in the aggregate will behave differently, follow a different definition of winning. Still, I harbor the hope. In this instance, however, it's probably too late for change; no doubt the slanging match over abortion will continue. It probably won't greatly matter whether the "rigid medievalists" or the "callous post-Christians" prevail; they're both building a disaster.

ROBERT G. HOYT

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

(Act of August 12, 1970; Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code)

- Title of Publication: CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS
- Date of Filing: September 27, 1977
- Frequency of Issue: Biweekly except monthly in July, August and January.
- Location of known office of publication: 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
- Location of the headquarters or general business offices of the Publisher: 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
- Names and addresses of Publisher, Editor and Managing Editor: CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS, INC., Wayne H. Cowan, Vivian Lindermayer, all of 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
- Owner: CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS, INC., 537 West 121st St., New York, N.Y. 10027
- Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None
- The purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes have not changed during preceding 12 months.
- Table with 4 columns: Item, Extent and Nature of Circulation, Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months, Single issue published nearest to filing date.

Book Publishing

Manuscripts invited for prompt editorial review and terms of publication. All categories invited including scholarly works. Professional editing, design and production plus expert promotion and distribution since 1920. Send manuscript or inquiry, or call (212) 642-8303. Ask for free Authors' Guide R-1.

DORRANCE & COMPANY
35 Cricket Tr., Ardmere, Pa. 19003

FREE with your subscription to CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Receive Dr. Schaeffer's major new work free with your no-risk introductory subscription at 38% off the single-copy price.

Christianity Today is written for thinking Christians, committed followers of Christ who seek facts and perspectives on today's fast-changing religious scene. In each issue you'll find:

- **Timely**, thought-provoking articles on current issues faced by evangelical Christians everywhere—abortion, the death penalty, the Middle East, crime.
- **Unrivaled**, unmatched coverage of religious news—throughout America and around the world, including what's happening in missions today.
- **Helpful Editors** on Contemporary Problems—C.T.'s editors grapple with the difficult choices facing the nation and the church, and recommend directions for the future.
- **Regular Columns**—Witness Stand, Books, Refiner's Fire, Current Religious Thought, and More.
- **In-depth discussion** and interpretation of important Biblical passages—excellent for personal devotion and church participation.

Try *Christianity Today* for yourself. You'll find it to be a source of challenge, stimulation, information, and solid personal help.

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT THE VALUE OF CHRISTIANITY TODAY

INDISPENSABLE. "Christianity Today is the one magazine that is indispensable reading for me. It has stimulated me to see the world more clearly as God sees it. This magazine stretches my thinking and deepens my awareness." Billy Graham Evangelist

ESSENTIAL: "I couldn't think of being without Christianity Today. It is one of the essential tools with which we work." Stanley Mooneyham, President, World Vision

INTELLECTUALLY RESPECTABLE. "Christianity Today has met the need for an intellectually respectable presentation of evangelical Christian faith." Mark Hatfield, Senator

Christianity Today is described as:
"... alert religious reporting and comment" by TIME Magazine

"... the urbane spokesman for the evangelical Christianity." by the NEW YORK TIMES

"... the nation's leading evangelical journal." by the CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"... the voice of evangelical Protestantism." by the WASHINGTON POST

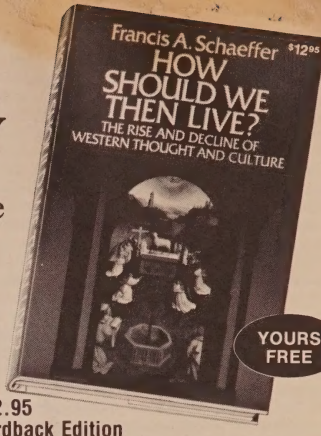
IMPORTANT SAVINGS WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE NOW

By subscribing direct, you get important savings over the single copy price. One-year (24-issues) costs only \$15.00, a Big 38% savings over the single copy price of \$24.00. Two-years (48 issues) costs only \$22.50, an even Bigger 53% savings over the single copy price of \$48.00. Just fill in the coupon, clip it out, and mail it today!

Twice As Often

Christianity Today is published more often than any other evangelical magazine. It comes to you twice a month (24 times a year). It's like getting two magazines for the price of one. *Christianity Today* will keep you more current more often than any other publication.

"No-Risk" Trial Offer from the Publisher
You can try *Christianity Today* with absolutely no risk or obligation on your part. Just check the "Bill Me Later" box on the coupon below. Try the first several issues of *Christianity Today*. If you are not completely satisfied you need only write the word "Cancel" across the invoice, we'll send you. There's no obligation of any kind on your part. The expense is ours.
Harold Myra, Publisher



YOURS FREE

\$12.95 Hardback Edition

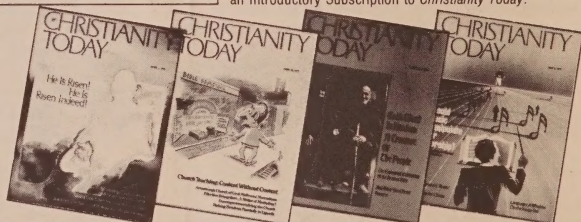
2 lb. 7"x10" oversized volume, 288 pages, 107 illustrations
Chronological Index, Topical Index, and Select Bibliography Included

How Should We Then Live? is the culmination of 40 years' study and research by Dr. Francis Schaeffer, one of the leading evangelical thinkers and Biblical scholars of our time. In this major work he traces the rise and decline of Western thought and culture, and the implications this has for each of us.

In Dr. Schaeffer's own words, "the choices we make in the next decade will mold irrevocably the direction of our culture . . . and the lives of our children."

This brilliant work stresses the importance of basing our choices on the Biblical view—rather than yielding to the subtle pressures of the world's false values and shallow answers. Dr. Schaeffer proposes concrete answers to the questions brought about by the collapse of traditional Western thought.

How Should We Then Live? gives Christians everywhere the help and understanding they need to make the right choices. Normally a \$12.95 value at your local Christian Bookstore, *How Should We Then Live?* (in the original, hardback edition) is **YOURS FREE** with an Introductory Subscription to *Christianity Today*.



The Twice Monthly Magazine No Thoughtful Evangelical Should Be Without

Christianity Today, Subscription Services

P.O. Box 3600, Greenwich, Conn. 06830

☐ YES, enter my subscription to *Christianity Today*, the twice monthly magazine for today's thoughtful evangelicals, for the term indicated to the right. I understand that I will receive, absolutely free as your gift to me, Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer's latest book *How Should We Then Live?* (\$12.95 hardback edition) with my subscription. I accept your UNCONDITIONAL GUARANTEE OF SATISFACTION with its full money-back refund on the remaining portion of my subscription should I at any time, for any reason, choose to cancel my subscription. **The book is mine to keep.**

Check one: ☐ 1 year (24 issues) for only \$15.00, a BIG 38% savings over the single copy price of \$24.00.

☐ 2 years (48 issues) for only \$22.50, a SUPER 53% savings over the single copy price of \$48.00.

Check one: ☐ I Enclose Payment. Please send my copy of *How Should We Then Live?* to me immediately.

☐ Please Bill Me Later. I understand that my copy of *How Should We Then Live?* will be sent to me upon receipt of my payment.

Check one: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Check one: ☐ Layman ☐ Minister

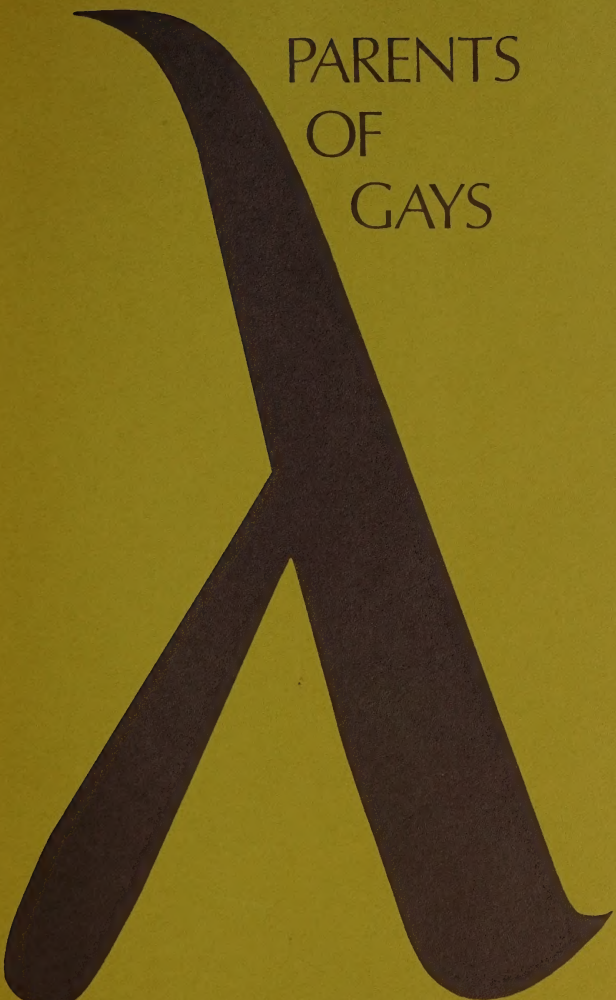
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

UNCONDITIONAL GUARANTEE OF SATISFACTION

If at any time, for any reason, you are not completely satisfied with *Christianity Today* you may cancel your subscription and receive a full 100% refund on the remaining unmailed issues. No questions asked. **The book is yours to keep.**

THIS OFFER GOOD FOR RENEWALS AS WELL AS NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS

PARENTS
OF
GAYS



PARENTS OF GAYS

\$1.00

Copyright 1975, 1976 by Betty Fairchild

Cover design by Beth Russo

The Greek letter, Lambda, which appears on the cover, has been adopted internationally as the symbol of liberation for all gay women and men. Thus, it seems appropriate for parents of gay children, who must also become liberated.

First printing	April 1975
Second printing, revised	July 1975
Third printing, revised	February 1976
Fourth printing	September 1976
Fifth Printing	June 1977

To order this pamphlet:

Single copy - \$1.00 + \$.35 per order from:
Lambda Rising, 2012 S St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

Bulk orders (10 or more) - \$.60 each, FOB DC from:
Stone Age Trading Co., 1724 20th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

This pamphlet, initially prepared in 1975, is based on the early experiences of the Washington, D.C. Parents of Gays group. However, although the content has not been updated much since that time, the information is basically applicable to parents and gay children everywhere. Other publications, some of which are listed at the back of this booklet, plus a number of forthcoming books, will enhance the reader's understanding of this area of human sexuality and what it means in the family context.

PARENTS OF GAYS
Washington, D.C.

BEGINNINGS

Parents of Gays of Washington, D.C. came into existence on May 1, 1974, when four women--strangers to each other at the time, but with a deep common bond--met in an apartment in Northwest Washington. None of us knew what would happen that night; yet each of us hoped to share or learn something that would help us deal with having a child who was gay.

During the evening, we talked with each other --encouragingly or hesitantly, with pain or with puzzlement, or sometimes with a bit of anger. But what was new to all of us was this first-time sharing of heretofore un verbalized feelings and experiences with others who had been through the same thing.

Since that first meeting, many things have happened. Parents of Gays now usually meets twice monthly. From time to time, new people hear about our group, and some of them start to attend meetings. A few come only once or twice; others return regularly and begin to have a strong interest in what happens in the group. POG-Washington has remained relatively small; although some 30 parents have come to at least one meeting, regular attendance ranges from four to eight parents, plus two or three visitors.

This booklet has come out of our experience. We hope it will give some new insights and also answer some questions--about our group and about the whole subject of mothers and fathers in relation to their gay daughters and sons.

* * * * *

Why a Parents of Gays group?

In 1969, the Gay Liberation movement was brought to public attention when gay people first fought back during a police raid of the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village. Since that time, the needs and rights of homosexual women and men have drawn increasing attention in our society. Many people have re-examined their own long-held beliefs and attitudes, and some good changes are beginning to take place. Gay activists and others are working hard to advance the rights of homosexuals in a number of areas, and to bring to an end the oppressive, cruel, and degrading treatment they have suffered for centuries. Questions about gays in the military, the custodial rights of gay mothers and fathers, and legal marriages for same-sex couples have all been in the news spotlight during 1975. In addition, some segments of the media are beginning to accept responsibility for representing and portraying gay people accurately and fairly, and some progress is being made on other fronts. Within many occupations and professions, men and women are openly forming gay caucuses and other groups through which they are working for change. By early 1976, some two dozen cities had passed equal rights amendments intended to benefit gay people, and efforts are being aimed at the state and national levels. But changing laws does not automatically change attitudes, and thus deeply held prejudices and stereotyped images of homosexuals still prevail among much of society in this country.

While many gay people themselves still meet indignity and indifference in their daily lives, there are others who suffer with and for them in virtual silence: their families. Mother, father, brothers and sisters, and sometimes other family members still undergo tremendous pain, anxiety, fear, and other stress, after it is learned that a son or a daughter is gay. There are few situations which people feel less free to discuss with others. Very often, parents

determine to keep this information from other children in the family, and certainly from relatives and friends. This means, among other things, that there is no one to talk to about it. If it happens that one parent is raising the family alone, the sense of isolation is even greater. (But even in two-parent families, differing attitudes toward their gay child create additional stress for Mom and Dad, instead of shared support and concern.) And since most parents' feelings of shame and guilt about the subject of homosexuality--imposed on them by society, culture, and the church--are likely to be strong, their anguish over this "terrible secret" is magnified.

To whom can distressed parents turn for help, for accurate information, or for sympathetic understanding? Even today, most doctors and psychiatrists have little to offer but an attempt to "cure" or to help the child "adjust to this unfortunate condition." Although in 1974, the American Psychiatric Association voted to remove homosexuality from the "sick list," the official action did not remove the bias of hundreds of Association members, some of whom have requested that the decision be reconsidered. Some parents turn to their pastor, rabbi, or priest, but, although a number of religious leaders are broadening their understanding of homosexuality, that number is still incredibly small. And if relatives and friends are told, they may at best "sympathize" with the "great tragedy" that has struck the family, and at worst draw away, and even forbid the gay person to come around their children any more.

Just as a young person "coming out" often feels that he or she is the only gay person in the world, so parents faced with the news that their child is gay usually feel desperately alone....This, in effect, may answer the question: Why a parents' group?

So...how did it all start?

One day in March 1974, three young men struck up a conversation with a woman named Betty Fairchild as they happened to meet in a gay headshop near Dupont Circle. As they chatted, Betty told them how, in the four years since her son had confided in her, she had come to terms with his being gay. She ruefully admitted her initial reaction of shock and pain, which she attributed to her uninformed and conventional viewpoint toward homosexuality at the time. But, through a variety of experiences, she now felt totally comfortable with the subject. One of the young men commented that there ought to be a group for parents in this area, so that they could meet and talk things over and maybe get some new ideas on the subject. And thus, the seed was planted. With a little nourishment and time, it grew and flowered, as Betty decided to see what she could do to get a group started.

The most effective (and perhaps the only possible) approach to reaching parents seemed to be through the gay community itself. Betty met with members of the Washington Area Gay Community Council (since disbanded), the Mattachine Society, Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), and with other gatherings of gay people--and everywhere the prospect of a group for Parents of Gays was met with enthusiasm and support. The Gay Blade, Washington's monthly gay newspaper, published notices, and "Friends," a local radio show by and for gay people, devoted an entire program to the potential group and continued to announce its formation regularly. Because it seemed important to provide a personal contact for parents who might not write or call an unidentified number, Betty decided to use her name and telephone as that contact. This proved an effective way to provide reassuring information to hesitant or skeptical parents.

Information and encouragement were soon forthcoming from the Parents of Gays group in New York City, which had been organized the year before.

It took about two months for even those first three parents to respond, and for the first meeting to take place. After a few meetings at irregular intervals, Parents of Gays of Washington decided to get together twice a month.

These meetings--what are they all about?

One question we're always asked is: "What do you do at your meetings? Once parents decide to 'risk it' and come to Parents of Gays, what actually happens?"

A good many sessions involve personal stories, as parents share their experiences and feelings about their gay son or daughter. Virtually everyone becomes aware of a tremendous sense of release by starting to talk with others about what has been, up to now, a painful and almost entirely hidden subject. A woman says, quietly: "I just couldn't believe it when my son told me ...and I still can't." As others in the group offer sympathetic encouragement, she suddenly feels as if a wound has started to drain and healing begins. Another mother insists that she is irritated at her gay daughter; but she comes back next time, saying: "After talking with all of you, it doesn't seem quite so terrible." And that is the beginning of acceptance. Even those parents who go home from their initial meetings still unable to "accept" speak of the surprising relief at no longer feeling so isolated and alone.

But usually parents who are really interested in learning (and most of those who come to our meetings are) find they begin to feel differently about homosexuality, and consequently about their gay child, as they gain new information through a variety of experiences.

What are the important things you do?

First, we have found that meeting and talking with gay people is exceptionally helpful. Since the group began, nearly 50 gay men and women have

joined us at one time or another. This provides the first opportunity for some parents to get to know gay people, other than their own child, and they are very reassured to see that they are vital, articulate, functioning, and interesting people, and a lot of fun to be with. Far from being shy about speaking with them, most parents will ask a lot of questions and voice their own apprehensions to these young men and women. And they are usually quite encouraged by the kind of information they get. Moreover, through these exchanges, both the parents and the gay women and men begin to understand each other's problems and feelings in a new way.

Second, some of our own gay sons or daughters occasionally come along to meetings. Frequently, a parent and child find themselves sharing things with each other or the group that they have never shared before, and they both gain new perspectives and insights. Other parents seem to benefit, too, by meeting these young people and observing them interrelating with their parents. Besides the increased communication, the children are always immensely pleased and proud of Mom or Dad for making the effort to understand, by coming to the Parents' group.

Another important goal of Parents of Gays is to encourage reading on the topic of homosexuality. We have a lot of good books and other materials available to take or to borrow. Most parents find that reading does expand the scope of their understanding, and they begin to see homosexuality as a universal phenomenon that is, in truth, a part of the normal range of human behavior--a pretty radical idea to most of them at first, as well as to society in general. Contemporary literature provides an increasing variety of helpful information, ranging from a discussion of "popular"--though frequently destructive--psychiatric approaches to the topic at hand, to personal life stories by lesbians and gay men, to dissertations on gay politics, to reports on studies of various aspects of the gay experience, to gay liberation writings, to

best-selling novels and important works that have been published recently. Also, a comprehensive and frequently updated list of positive readings is provided to suggest additional material. In addition, we call attention to pertinent articles as they increasingly appear in newspapers and magazines, and any appropriate newsletters and information from the Washington area or elsewhere are provided as available. (See Reading List and Other Materials, at back of booklet.)

As an additional help, we try to keep up on community activities. Knowing what's going on in Washington's gay community--a large and active one--brings into focus the number of gay people in the population in all professions, occupations, economic levels, etc., and the fact that many of them are actively working to help each other, whether in the areas of political, social or civil rights action; spiritual life; dissemination of information; physical and mental health care; entertainment and recreation; providing alternatives to the bars; growth through rap sessions and study groups; educating others for change; or establishing businesses by and for gay people.

In addition to all this, parents occasionally meet with gay people in other settings, and here again they see that their sons and daughters and their friends have interests, concerns, and good times similar to their own.

One Sunday some time ago, Parents of Gays attended the Metropolitan Community Church of Washington as a group activity. The service took on a special meaning for everyone, it seemed, as eight parents, accompanied by some of their children and friends, gathered together with the gay men and women of MCC to share in worship, communion, and a fellowship hour. We may repeat this rewarding experience as our membership grows and changes. It is quite revealing--no matter what one's religious preference--to see the gathering of sincere and

dedicated men and women of all ages, many of whom have felt unwelcome in other churches, who find in MCC a place where they are welcome.

Some times, some of our kids have taken Mom or Dad, or other family members, to one of the local gay bars. It is true that the occasional flamboyance or the unaccustomed sight of affection between two women or two men presents an astonishing scene to some newcomers, but this, too, is a good learning experience.

All of this--talking with other parents, reading some good materials, talking openly with our own children, and meeting a variety of gay women and men in a variety of situations--helps us understand our gay children (and ourselves) in a wonderful new way.

Why has POG-Washington remained a small group?

This question comes up a lot. We think there are a couple of good reasons. For one, it's usually pretty hard for parents to acknowledge publicly that they have a gay child. Most of them have hidden that fact for months or even years--from everyone, often even from themselves. Unfortunately, homosexuality, burdened as it is with such ugly connotations in our society, is almost impossible to deal with rationally. The mere word engenders such strong negative and emotional feelings that it is extremely difficult for parents to consider walking into a room of strangers, even supposedly sympathetic ones, when just doing so says: My child is homosexual. Many parents have never been able to say the word aloud! So it is that, even after they've heard about "a group for parents," the decision to join it is tough.

The other point is that ways to publicize the group seem limited, and word of it still has not reached many of the mothers and fathers in this area who may be aware that they "qualify."

However, even with the best of publicity, there are far too many parents who would never come to a Parents of Gays meeting.

What prevents parents from joining POG?

First of all, it turns out that a parent who does come to the group basically seems to have a good relationship with the child--despite whatever anguish exists at the moment. Now, several parents acknowledge that they first showed up--not because they thought it such a good idea, but only because their child had asked them to. Even so, they must have had some desire to learn or to understand better, as well as a willingness to find out what the group has to offer.

On the other hand, as we have often noted, the people who need the group most are the ones who will never show up. For, unfortunately, in a different family setting, where parents close themselves off from the gay child, or are hostile, angry, and vituperative, there's not much chance that Mom or Dad wants to learn anything. They say, instead: "How could you do this to us?" or "You keep your 'queer' friends away from the house! I don't want the neighbors to know!" And some parents would rather sweep the whole thing under the rug: "I'm not interested in hearing another word about--that!" Sadly enough, they seem more concerned with their own feelings, and with the opinions of others, than with what their child is feeling or trying to deal with. Young people say to us again and again: "I wish I could get my parents to come to your group--but they won't even talk about it"

Why is it so tough to find out
your child is gay?

For many parents, built-in expectations for the child (marriage, home, family, successful

career) seem suddenly smashed. Many mothers say that their first thought is: "No grandchildren!" There seems, too, to be a confusion of feelings and emotions: fear of what might happen to a gay child; guilt about where the parents "went wrong"; and, even in the best of us, some degree of panic that "people will find out." Some immediately think of "psychiatrist" and "cure," despite professional pronouncements that homosexuality is not a sickness. But most of all--because few parents, like other straight people, understand what it really means to be gay--there is an overwhelming revulsion at the whole idea, and an unstoppable feeling that it can't be true.

That revulsion seems to stem from the deeply ingrained prejudices and beliefs about a subject that Western society has declared taboo for hundreds of years. Throughout those years, during which it certainly has existed, homosexuality has been scorned and ridiculed, and regarded as a serious abnormality, a perversion, criminal behavior, or a mental illness. Most of us--including most gay people--have been taught, as if it were an undeniable fact of life, that homosexuality is wrong, evil, sick, hateful, and totally unnatural, unacceptable--and certainly unmentionable. Thus, it is hardly surprising that we are distressed to hear our child say: "Mom, Dad--I have something to tell you.... I am gay."

How does Parents of Gays actually help?

All the things we do seem to help--the talking, the reading, meeting with gay people, and so on. All of the group experiences, in addition to letting parents get their own feelings out, are intended to reinforce the concept that homosexuality is indeed within the range of normal human behavior, that it is as natural for some people to be gay as it is for others to be straight.

Most parents need time, and an ongoing series of experiences, before they truly understand this concept; it is not something that can be readily accepted just because it is rationally stated.

But it's important to note, too, that not all parents who come to the group are equally distressed. We have had two or three parents who have always understood and accepted their gay child. One mother actually had helped her daughter acknowledge that she was gay. Another set of parents, who told us they had been through some painful times in the past when they learned that both their children were gay, are now among our most positive and encouraging members. And one woman recently let us know that not just one, but two, of her children are gay. Parents such as these, who have "seen this through," contribute a great deal in support and inspiration to others in the group.

Furthermore, something interesting happens as new parents come into the group. Even those parents who still have doubts and fears will rally around a distressed newcomer with extraordinarily positive and comforting words!

Parents need to be assured that their gay children have as great a chance of a happy, fulfilling life as other young people. Mothers and fathers must come to know that many gay people establish long-term, deep, emotional relationships with partners; that, in any case, there is a caring, affection, and concern for one another in many gay relationships. One mother relates that several years ago when her young son broke up with a lover, the pain and heartache that she saw in him was a revelation as she understood for the first time that love can be an integral part of the homosexual person's life.

While not discounting the problems that a gay person faces, parents come to know--especially as they meet gay people themselves--that there are hundreds of successful, productive

gay people in every walk of life, that being gay does not automatically mean a rudderless, wasted life. Of course, some gay people (like many straights) have difficulties in their personal lives; it would be foolish to pretend that being gay ensures success--but it certainly does not ensure failure.

In our group, we often speak (and we're only half-kidding) of the day when, instead of the parents' saying: "Where did we go wrong?" they will say "Where did we go right!" Once Mom and Dad begin to understand homosexuality, the feeling that it is a tragic condition that they are responsible for is rather quickly dispelled.

Some parents repeatedly question "why" a person becomes gay. Instead of floundering through "scientific" explanations, none of which is universally accepted anyway, we do try to point out that it seems a waste of energy to look back and try to figure out why, with the implication that if we only knew, we could prevent! Rather, we might better devote those energies to learning to understand our own children and to finding ways to help them (if they want help) as well as to promoting understanding of homosexuality in general.

How can you promote this understanding?

As we become more comfortable with the subject, we find it possible to talk about it, as most of us have not previously been able to do. In a sense, we parents can build bridges between the gay people we know and love and other members of the family or our friends.

Those who have kept their child's gayness a secret from others in the family, who have dreaded and feared the reaction if it were discovered, may now find themselves able to reveal the information with strength and dignity to an older brother, or an aunt, or a younger sister.

And telling it that way--not apologetically or with a sense of shame or tragedy--will help the hearer to accept it that way too.

In the same way, when parents begin to tell their friends that their child is gay, it removes the need to keep a secret and allows them to talk freely about any concerns they may still have, as well as discussing their participation in the Parents' group, if this has become an important part of their lives. This way, the friends begin to learn new things, too.

Now, another way Parents of Gays in Washington has built these bridges to other people is through broadcast experience. Since the group began, we have arranged with, or been asked by, several commercial and public broadcasting stations to appear on more than a dozen radio and TV programs dealing with problems between gay children and their parents. Several group members, two or three of their children, and other gay women and men have participated in these programs, some of which have brought new members to the group, and all of which must have reached other viewers and listeners--an important audience. It isn't easy for parents to bring themselves to speak up publicly on the radio--and TV is even harder--but those few who have done so would probably not have been able to a few months earlier.

Some of us have taken part in seminars and talks before college classes, church groups, gay conferences in several states, coffee-house meetings, and other gatherings. These speaking experiences help us clarify our own thinking and attitudes, and allow us to present these viewpoints to various segments of the public.

How do you publicize Parents of Gays?

For much of our existence, we have prepared public service announcements about the group,

which several (tho' not all) local radio and television stations have broadcast from time to time. Occasionally, an item appears in one or another of the daily papers. We are presently planning on ways to carry out additional informational mailings for a wider coverage of the Washington area.

But primarily, word has reached area parents through the efforts of individuals and groups in the gay community. Referrals have come from Gay Switchboard, MCC, the Gay Youth group, the Gay Activists Alliance, and perhaps from other organizations, and the gay radio show has always announced our meetings. Parents of Gays-Washington is also listed in Just Us, the area directory to gay activities and services, and several suburban hotlines and crisis centers have our listing as well.

We still need to find new and even better ways to reach more parents of gay men and women, for we know that we have tapped only a tiny percentage of the total "parent" population in the Washington area.

Do you hear much from young people themselves?

An important element of the Parents of Gays project has been the opportunity to talk with a lot of young people, many of them troubled. Ever since the group began, and word of it went out into the community, we've been hearing from young gay women and men, who need someone to talk to. Sometimes, they are simply seeking information about the parents' group or perhaps about the gay community, but more often they are worried or distressed.

A college student will call to say: "I've just about decided to tell my parents I'm gay the next time I'm home. I was wondering if you could tell me how?" As we talk with him, we make it clear that there aren't any magic answers! (But for a few "non-magic" ideas, see

the list of suggestions for gay young people and their parents, at the end of this booklet.)

A young lesbian in high school calls in from upper Maryland: "My parents are really hassling me--and I don't know what to do." We don't have easy solutions for her, either, but, for the isolated young person, sometimes just talking the situation over with a sympathetic adult seems to be comforting. We often suggest the book, "Society and the Healthy Homosexual," as an excellent one for either child or parent to read, and there are many other helpful ones on the list in this publication. Sometimes we talk about some of the reasons why parents are so upset, which--even if the child knows already--seem to be helpful to discuss.

Then, there are all too many stories that strike your heart cold--reports of resentful and bitter parents: those who ordered their 15-year-old son out of the house and told him not to come back; or those who had the police pick up their boy after their anger and abuse had driven him to find another place to live; or the mother who listened in on every phone call her daughter made or received; or the father who never spoke to his teen-age daughter at all. Again and again, we hear of young people who want nothing more than to talk openly with their parents, but don't dare; stories of anxiety and fear and isolation, of having to lead double lives, of loving relationships that can never be shared with one's own family...and on...and on.

Then there is still much work to be done?

Indeed there is. As parents of gay children, many of us are deeply concerned about the tremendous need in the area of troubled gay men and women and their alienation from hostile parents--who themselves must be incredibly unhappy. Who can reach them? How can they be helped? How long must this kind of misery tear families apart?

We have not found the answers to these and other questions, nor do we presently have the resources to determine how these needs can be met.

* * * * *

PROGRESSION

Still and all, looking back on our experiences as a Parents of Gays group, those of us who have worked together know that we have come a long way, and we are rewarded by knowing that several of us have found help along the way. At the same time, we see new beginnings and distant goals.

And just as we tell new members: "You are not alone," we as a group are not alone. All across the country, parents and others are coming forth to help. Sometimes, young gays themselves will provide help and information, whether or not a POG group evolves. And how beautiful to learn of two mothers in separate cities, who have offered sympathetic guidance to parents and young people for many years--one, since 1957! Although more groups are needed, it is encouraging that we cannot keep an up-to-date list of POG groups/contacts--they proliferate too rapidly! (See following list of locations, as of June 1, 1977.)

Parents of Gays takes energy and dedication, but it is a work of love and concern--for our children, for ourselves, and--yes--perhaps for you and your children. We care about our gay daughters and sons, and we care about their lovers and friends and all gay people. We're talking about this because we would like to offer hope, encouragement, and perhaps some understanding to others....If all of us keep on learning and working together, then--who knows? Perhaps one day there will be nothing more to talk about!

* * * * *

THE "NO-MAGIC-ANSWER" LIST
or
Helpful Hints for Homosexuals
and Their Parents

The \$64 Question: How can I tell my parents
that I'm gay?

1. First, a lot depends on how you feel about being gay. If you think it's the greatest, that helps.
2. Choose the time to tell sensibly--when things are going well, or at least when a certain amount of calm prevails.
3. Don't blurt it out during an argument; it will become a weapon instead of a sharing.
4. You may want to tell only your mother, or only your father (depending on your particular relationship with either).
5. Lead into the telling, if you can, with an expression of your love and concern for your parents. If you don't usually say these things, think up something nice or thoughtful to say or do.
6. Be prepared for the likelihood that the news will upset and hurt your parents, and that one or both of them may lash out at you. Try not to respond defensively and angrily, but "allow" them this initial reaction.
7. Tell them: "You loved me before you knew this. I'm the same person I was then, and I hope you still love me."
8. Keep the lines of communication open, and remember that your parents are having to change their concept of you and your life--and that they probably don't have an accurate picture of what homosexuality is.
9. Read some of the books on the following list, and make them available to your parents.
10. If they cannot deal with this subject rationally, don't force the issue. Don't flaunt yourself or your friends defiantly--but if

your parents are willing to meet your friends, make sure they have the chance to do so.

Special Note: Remember how long it took you to come to terms with your sexual preference and then how long it took you to get to the point of talking to your parents. So--when they can't seem to "understand" right away--no matter how "clearly" you've explained everything--then be sure to give them time to take in all this new information.

And for Mom and Dad: Now that we know--what?

1. First of all: LET YOUR CHILD KNOW YOU STILL LOVE HIM OR HER.
2. Be aware that the telling has not been easy for your child, and that he or she is sharing something important with you. REALLY LISTEN.
3. Try to find out how your child is feeling, and what being gay means to her or to him.
4. Don't panic. No matter how strongly you feel, try to handle your reactions with some restraint. If you can be honest with your feelings, it will help both you and your child. For example:

"Son, I'll admit this hits pretty hard. But let's talk about it again, soon."

"This isn't easy to hear, Sue, and frankly, I'm shocked. But I'm glad you told me."

"Jack, I'm worried that you'll get into trouble with the police....Please be careful."
5. After the initial revelation, don't consider the subject closed! Your child will want and need to talk about this again, if you're willing to listen.
6. Give yourself a chance to meet your child's friends. It will mean a lot to your child--and you may be pleasantly surprised if you

let yourself get to know them. Besides, those young friends need sympathetic parents to talk with, too.

7. Ask your child for some good books on the subject of homosexuality (or use the following list). Read them.
8. If there are others in the family who should be told, and that is your task, try to put it off until you feel better about the whole thing. (And you will!)
9. Don't let yourself relate every petty annoyance with your child to "being gay." Keep things in perspective. Try not to start hassing the child about every move. The child should still have his or her customary freedom and privacy.
10. If you ever hug your child, do it a lot now! And once more: LET YOUR GAY CHILD KNOW YOUR LOVE HAS NOT CHANGED OR GONE AWAY.

Telling Mom and Dad you're gay
Is not an easy thing to say.
And, where the folks are coming from,
It's harder news to hear than some.
But if your family is caring
You'll gather closer, through this
sharing.

--Anonymous

READING LIST AND OTHER MATERIALS

BOOKS

Nonfiction

- o Abbot, Sidney and Love, Barbara. SAPPHO WAS A RIGHT-ON WOMAN. Stein & Day, 1972.

Readable, pertinent discussion of gay women: how it really is; revealing account of lesbians and the Women's Movement a few years ago; much on "becoming an independent and whole person," of interest to straight women, too.

- o Bell, Arthur. DANCING THE GAY LIB BLUES. Simon & Schuster, 1971.

An interesting account of "a year in the homosexual liberation movement...."

- o Clarke, Lige and Nichols, Jack. I HAVE MORE FUN WITH YOU THAN ANYBODY. St. Martin's, 1972.

An engaging yet serious account of two young men's relationship and experiences. Includes good times together, problems met and solved, family reactions, activity in Gay Liberation, and much personal philosophy. Good initial reading.

- o Clarke, Lige and Nichols, Jack. ROOMMATES CAN'T ALWAYS BE LOVERS. St. Martin's, 1974.

Answers to readers' questions, plus some topical discussions. Again--warm, caring, and sensible.

- o Fisher, Peter. THE GAY MYSTIQUE: THE MYTH AND REALITY OF MALE HOMOSEXUALITY. Stein & Day, 1972.

How members of society think and act about homosexuality, and what happens to gays. Oppression of gays in all facets of life described; sometimes satirical, to good effect.

- o Gearhart, Sally and Johnson, William R. (eds.). LOVING WOMEN/LOVING MEN: GAY LIBERATION AND THE CHURCH. Glide Publications, 1974.

Offers a helpful perspective to those who are troubled by Biblical references "against" homosexuality. Also, excellent presentation of the conflict between organized religion and gays--with various views on the subject.

o GREAT GAY IN THE MORNING. Times Change Press, 1972. Articles written by members of a radical commune, mostly gay. Fascinating insights into their intensely personal viewpoints of their shared experiences.

o Hamilton, Wallace. CHRISTOPHER AND GAY. Saturday Review Press, 1973.

The author left straight life in Baltimore in his mid-fifties to come out in New York's Village scene. He tells about the people he meets and his experiences. His scene is not everyone's, but his portrayal is vivid and interesting.

o Hoffman, Martin. THE GAY WORLD: MALE HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE SOCIAL CREATION OF EVIL. Bantam Books, 1968. Published after a 1968 study of gay life in San Francisco; readable, not pedantic. Somewhat dated, as some aspects have changed for the better. Read other books first.

o Jay, Karla and Young, Allen (eds.). OUT OF THE CLOSETS: VOICES OF GAY LIBERATION. Douglas-Links Books, 1972. Collection of varied writings of a few years ago. Excellent for range of attitudes and concepts included.

o Jones, Clinton R. WHAT ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY? A Youth Forum Book. Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1972. Questions many young gay people (and others) ask, with good straightforward, informative answers. Excellent throughout; particularly good sections on "family" and "church."

o Martin, Del and Lyon, Phyllis. LESBIAN/WOMAN. Glide Publications, 1972.

Highly recommended by gay women and gay leaders of both sexes. A forthright, warm, understanding presentation by two women who have been on the scene for a number of years and who helped establish a national lesbian organization. Full of verve, humor.

o Nicolson, Nigel. PORTRAIT OF A MARRIAGE. Bantam Books, 1973.

An intimate and sensitive portrayal of the author's parents--his mother, Vita Sackville-West, in particular.

o Perry, Troy and Lucas, Charles L. THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD AND HE KNOWS I'M GAY. Bantam Books, 1973. The founder of the now-international Metropolitan Community Church relates simply and readably how it was for him.

o Reid, John. THE BEST LITTLE BOY IN THE WORLD. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1973.

One man's experience, from early years to the present. The confusions, agonies, discoveries, and joys of being gay, vividly and interestingly told. (Some gays don't like it; others do.)

o Tobin, Kay and Wicker, Randy. THE GAY CRUSADERS. Paperback Library, 1972. Out of print, but may still be in bookstores and libraries. Reprinted by Arno publishers in series, 1975.

Biographical sketches of key people in the gay movement, delineating their family ties and relationships; excels in showing diversity of backgrounds from which gay people emerge.

o Tripp, C.A. THE HOMOSEXUAL MATRIX. McGraw-Hill, 1975. This recent book offers a broad perspective on homosexuality (and on heterosexuality). Give interesting new insights and viewpoints and expands the reader's overall understanding of this sexual orientation--all in quite readable terms. Considered a "major achievement" by distinguished reviewers.

o Weltge, Ralph W. (ed.). THE SAME SEX: AN APPRAISAL OF HOMOSEXUALITY. Pilgrim/United Church Press, 1969. Several professional people, including gay activists, give varying personal views on homosexuality, in terms of religious beliefs, ethics and morality, and society today.

o Weinberg, George. SOCIETY AND THE HEALTHY HOMOSEXUAL. Anchor Books, 1973.

Contemporary, positive presentation of common (and inaccurate) stereotypes and myths, refuting "popular" psychiatric views and therapies. Excellent chapter on "telling parents" directed to both gay child and parent. Considered the best of current literature by gays and counselors to gays.

Fiction

- o Hall, Radclyffe. THE WELL OF LONELINESS. Corgi Press (first edition, 1928).
A beautiful early novel of lesbianism that has become a classic.
- o Hobson, Laura Z. CONSENTING ADULT. Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1975.
...A troubled young man reveals to his mother that he is homosexual....And exceptionally fine novel of resulting family conflicts and their eventual resolution. A "must" for all parents of gay children, for gay women and men-- and for everyone else!
- o Warren, Patricia Nell. THE FRONT RUNNER. William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1974.
Best-selling novel frankly and understandingly portraying the love between a mature man and his young protege. Dignified, touching, and valid.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOKS (highly recommended)

- o Brown, Dr. Howard. FAMILIAR FACES, HIDDEN LIVES. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976.
- o Clark, Don. LOVING SOMEONE GAY. Celestial Arts, 1977.
- o McNeill, John J., S.J. THE CHURCH AND THE HOMOSEXUAL. Sheed Andrews & McMeel, 1976.
- o Silverstein, Charles. A FAMILY MATTER: A PARENT'S GUIDE TO HOMOSEXUALITY. McGraw Hill, due Sept. 1977.
- o Simpson, Ruth. FROM THE CLOSETS TO THE COURTS. Richard Seaver Book/The Viking Press, 1976.

PAMPHLET

"20 Questions About Homosexuality." Gay Activists Alliance, P.O. Box 2, Village Station, N.Y.C. 10014. Clear and direct answers to all the questions everyone asks.

AUDIO CASSETTE

COUNSELING PARENTS OF GAYS by Rev. Paul R. Shanley, 1975. Available for \$7.95 from: Ampro, Inc., 101 Tremont, Boston, MA. 02108.

Assigned by Cardinal Medeiros of Boston to minister to the gay community, Father Shanley addresses in particular Catholic parents of gay men, but his message is helpful to all parents of both men and women. By giving information about homosexuality and pointing out the myths and stereotypes, by discussing homophobic attitudes and showing how and why a parent can (and must) be supportive of the gay child, he gives parents (and others) a reassuring perspective on a situation that is almost invariably troubling at first.

OTHER MATERIAL

As the number and variety of excellent books, articles, magazines, films and audiovisuals, and gay publications proliferate, it is impossible to list all the "good ones" here. This listing includes most of what the Parents of Gays group in Washington has collected in its library. There are many more. For comprehensive reference, see:

A GAY BIBLIOGRAPHY, fifth edition, prepared by the Task Force on Gay Liberation, Social Responsibilities Round Table, American Library Association. Single copy: 25¢.

To order (and for quantity prices), send to: Barbara Gittings, Coordinator, Box 2383, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103.

Publication includes books (nonfiction), bibliographies, directories, articles, pamphlets, periodicals, audiovisuals, and special collections.

* * * * *

PARENTS OF GAYS
Groups or Contacts
a/o June 1977

ARIZONA - Phoenix	NEW YORK CITY
CALIFORNIA	OHIO - Columbus
Long Beach	OREGON
Los Angeles	Portland
San Diego	Springfield
San Francisco	PENNSYLVANIA
San Jose	Pittsburgh
COLORADO - Denver	Philadelphia
FLORIDA	TEXAS - Houston
Jacksonville	VERMONT - Barre
Pensacola	WASHINGTON, D.C. (area)
Miami	WISCONSIN
GEORGIA - Atlanta	Milwaukee
IOWA - Mason City	Whitewater
KENTUCKY - Louisville	CANADA - Montreal
MAINE - Kennebunkport (summer only)	
MARYLAND - Baltimore	
MASS. - Boston	
MINN. - Minneapolis	
MISSOURI	
Kansas City	
St. Louis	
NEW JERSEY - Cranbury	

(A complete listing of contact names, addresses,
and telephone numbers is available for 25¢ from:

Betty Fairchild
700 Emerson St.
Denver CO 80218

A GAY BIBLIOGRAPHY

Task Force on Gay Liberation
Social Responsibilities Round Table
American Library Association

25¢

FIFTH EDITION – SUMMER 1975

This selective non-fiction bibliography features materials that present or support positive views of the gay experience, that help in understanding a gay-related issue, or that have special historical value.

BOOKS

Ordering information is given only for publishers not listed in BOOKS IN PRINT.

- Abbott, Sidney and Love, Barbara. **SAPPHO WAS A RIGHT-ON WOMAN: A LIBERATED VIEW OF LESBIANISM.** Stein & Day, 1972, cloth & paper eds.
- Altman, Dennis. **HOMOSEXUALITY: OPPRESSION AND LIBERATION.** Outerbridge (dutton), 1971 (out of print). Also Avon paper ed.
- Bailey, Derrick S. **HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE WESTERN CHRISTIAN TRADITION.** Longmans Green 1955 (out of print). Reprint 1975 by Archon—Shoe String Press.
- Barnett, Walter. **SEXUAL FREEDOM AND THE CONSTITUTION.** University of New Mexico Press, 1973.
- Bell, Arthur. **DANCING THE GAY LIB BLUES.** Simon & Schuster, 1971 (out of print).
- Boggan, E. Carrington et al. **THE RIGHTS OF GAY PEOPLE** (An American Civil Liberties Union Handbook). Avon, 1975, paper orig.
- Churchill, Wainwright. **HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOR AMONG MALES: A CROSS-CULTURAL AND CROSS-SPECIES INVESTIGATION.** Hawthorn, 1967 (out of print). Also Spectrum—Prentice-Hall paper ed.
- Clarke, Lige and Nichols, Jack. **I HAVE MORE FUN WITH YOU THAN ANYBODY.** St. Martins, 1972.
- Clarke, Lige and Nichols, Jack. **ROOMMATES CAN'T ALWAYS BE LOVERS: AN INTIMATE GUIDE TO MALE-MALE RELATIONSHIPS.** St. Martins, 1974.
- Covina, Gina and Galana, Laurel, eds. **THE LESBIAN READER: AN AMAZON QUARTERLY ANTHOLOGY.** Amazon Press, 1975 (Nov.), paper orig., illus. (Amazon Press, 395 60th St., Oakland, CA 94618, \$4.50 prepaid, discount to bookstores.)
- Fisher, Peter. **THE GAY MYSTIQUE: THE MYTH AND REALITY OF MALE HOMOSEXUALITY.** Stein & Day, 1972, cloth & paper eds.
- Foster, Jeannette H. **SEX VARIANT WOMEN IN LITERATURE: A HISTORICAL AND QUANTITATIVE SURVEY.** Vantage Press, 1956 (out of print). Reprint late 1975 by Diana Press, with Afterword by Gene Damon.
- Freedman, Mark. **HOMOSEXUALITY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING.** Brooks-Cole (div. of Wadsworth), 1971, paper orig.
- Gearhart, Sally and Johnson, William R., eds. **LOVING WOMEN/LOVING MEN: GAY LIBERATION AND THE CHURCH.** Glide, 1974, paper orig.
- Hart, H.L.A. **LAW, LIBERTY AND MORALITY.** Stanford University Press, 1963, cloth & paper eds.
- Hoffman, Martin. **THE GAY WORLD: MALE HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE SOCIAL CREATION OF EVIL.** Basic Books, 1968. Also Bantam paper ed.

- Hyde, H. Montgomery. **THE LOVE THAT DARED NOT SPEAK ITS NAME.** Little, Brown, 1970 (out of print).
- Jay, Karla and Young, Allen, eds. **OUT OF THE CLOSETS: VOICES OF GAY LIBERATION.** Douglas-Links (Quick Fox), 1972 (out of print). Also Pyramid paper ed.
- Johnston, Jill. **LESBIAN NATION: THE FEMINIST SOLUTION.** Simon & Schuster, 1973, cloth & paper (Touchstone) eds.
- Jones, Clinton R. **HOMOSEXUALITY AND COUNSELING.** Fortress Press, 1974, paper orig.
- Katz, Jonathan, ed. **HOMOSEXUALITY: LESBIANS AND GAY MEN IN SOCIETY, HISTORY AND LITERATURE.** Arno Press, 1975. [56 titles — see list elsewhere.]
- Kinsey, Alfred C. et al. **SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN THE HUMAN FEMALE.** Saunders, 1953. Also Pocket Books paper ed.
- Kinsey, Alfred C. et al. **SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN THE HUMAN MALE.** Saunders, 1948.
- Klaich, Dolores. **WOMAN PLUS WOMAN: ATTITUDES TOWARD LESBIANISM.** Simon & Schuster, 1974. Also Morrow paper ed.
- Lauritsen, John and Thorstad, David. **THE EARLY HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT (1864-1935).** Times Change Press, 1974, illus.
- Lehman, J. Lee, ed. **GAYS ON CAMPUS.** National Gay Student Center, 1975, paper orig. (Nat'l. Gay Student Center, 2115 S St. NW, Wash., DC 20008, \$3 prepaid, discount to bookstores.)
- Martin, Del and Lyon, Phyllis. **LESBIAN/WOMAN.** Glide, 1972. Also Bantam paper ed.
- Miller, Merle. **ON BEING DIFFERENT: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A HOMOSEXUAL.** Random House, 1971. Also Popular Library paper ed.
- Murphy, John. **HOMOSEXUAL LIBERATION: A PERSONAL VIEW.** Praeger, 1971 (out of print).
- Oberholzer, W. Dwight, ed. **IS GAY GOOD? ETHICS, THEOLOGY AND HOMOSEXUALITY.** Westminster Press, 1971, paper orig.
- Perry, Troy with Lucas, Charles L. **THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD AND HE KNOWS I'M GAY.** Nash, 1972 (out of print). Also Bantam paper ed.
- Richmond, Len and Noguera, Gary, eds. **THE GAY LIBERATION BOOK.** Ramparts, 1973, cloth & paper eds., illus.
- Rule, Jane. **LESBIAN IMAGES.** Doubleday, 1975.
- Simpson, Ruth. **FROM THE CLOSET TO THE COURTS: THE LESBIAN TRANSITION.** Viking, 1975 (Nov.).
- Teal, Donn. **THE GAY MILITANTS.** Stein & Day, 1971 (out of print).
- Tobin, Kay and Wicker, Randy. **THE GAY CRUSADERS.** Paperback Library, 1972, paper orig., illus. (out of print). Reprint 1975 by Arno Press.
- Tripp, C.A. **THE HOMOSEXUAL MATRIX.** McCraw-Hill 1975.

- 25 to 6 Baking & Trucking Society. **GREAT GAY IN THE MORNING: ONE GROUP'S APPROACH TO COMMUNAL LIVING AND SEXUAL POLITICS.** Times Change Press, 1972, illus.
- Tyler, Parker. **SCREENING THE SEXES: HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE MOVIES.** Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1972. Also Anchor—Doubleday paper ed. Both illus.
- Weinberg, George. **SOCIETY AND THE HEALTHY HOMOSEXUAL.** St. Martins, 1972. Also Anchor—Doubleday paper ed.
- Weinberg, Martin S. and Williams, Colin J. **MALE HOMOSEXUALS: THEIR PROBLEMS AND ADAPTATIONS.** Oxford University Press, 1974. Also Penguin paper ed.
- Weltge, Ralph W., ed. **THE SAME SEX: AN APPRAISAL OF HOMOSEXUALITY.** Pilgrim—United Church Press, 1969, paper ed.
- Women's Press Collective. **LESBIANS SPEAK OUT.** Women's Press Collective, 1974, paper orig., illus. (Women's Press, 5251 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94618, \$3 prepaid, discount to bookstores.)
- Wysor, Bettie. **THE LESBIAN MYTH: INSIGHTS AND CONVERSATIONS.** Random House, 1974.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES & DIRECTORIES

- Damon, Gene et al. **THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE: A BIBLIOGRAPHY.** 2nd ed. The Ladder, 1975. Approx. 2,500 entries, 96 pp. The Ladder, Box 5025, Washington Sta., Reno, NV 89503, \$10, bookstore discount available.
- Dignity. **A CATHOLIC BIBLIOGRAPHY ON HOMOSEXUALITY.** Dignity, 1975. 46 entries. Dignity-National, 755 Boylston, Rm. 514, Boston, MA 02116, free.
- GAY AIRWAYS: LIST OF REGULAR GAY BROADCASTS IN U.S. Public Interest Media Project, 3916 Locust Walk, Phila., PA 19104, 20c.
- GAY AND LESBIAN-FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS LIST. Complete for U.S. Approx. 1,000 entries, updated monthly. National Gay Task Force, 80 5th Ave., Rm. 506, NYC, NY 10011, \$15 gay movement groups (\$20 on press-on labels), \$100 commercial businesses (on labels); allow 4 weeks delivery.
- GAY BOOKSTORES AND MAIL ORDER SERVICES, U.S. & CANADA. Natl. Gay Student Center, 2115 S St. NW, Wash., DC 20008, 25c prepaid.
- GAY PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CAUCUSES (U.S.). Natl. Gay Task Force, 80 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10011, 25c.
- GAYELLOW PAGES. Classified directory of gay businesses and services. Semiannual. *Gayellow Pages*, Box 292, Village Sta., NYC, NY 10014, single issue \$5, 4 issues \$10.
- Kuda, Marie J., ed. **WOMEN LOVING WOMEN: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.** 2nd printing: Womanpress, 1975. Approx. 200 entries, 28 pp. Womanpress, Box 59330, Chicago, IL 60645, \$1.50 prepaid, bulk discount available.
- STUDENT GAY GROUPS, U.S. & CANADA. 3rd ed. (1975). Approx. 180 entries. Natl. Gay Student Center, 2115 S St., NW, Wash., DC 20008, 50c prepaid.
- Young, Ian. **THE MALE HOMOSEXUAL IN LITERATURE: A BIBLIOGRAPHY.** Scarecrow Press, 1975 (fall). Approx. 3,000 entries, 250 pp. Scarecrow Press, 52 Liberty, Box 656, Metuchen, NJ 08840, \$9.

ARTICLES

- Basile, R.A. "Lesbian Mothers I" and "Lesbian Mothers II." *Women's Rights Law Reporter*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Dec. 1974) & Vol. 3, No. 1 (Sept. 1975). (Women's Rights Law Reporter, 180 University Ave., Newark, NJ 07102, each issue \$3.50, reprint of both articles available Oct. 1975, reprint price to be set).
- Baum, Gregory. "Catholic Homosexuals." *Commonweal*, Feb. 15, 1974, 8-11.
- Brudnoy, David and van den Haag, Ernest. "Reflections on the Issue of Gay Rights." *National Review*, July 19, 1974, 802-806. (National Review, 150 E. 35, NYC, NY 10016, issue 50c).
- Connexion, May 1973. Articles: "The Lesbian and God the Father," "Gay, Proud and Christian," "No Smog in Irvine," "God's Gays." (Published by United Ministries in Higher Education; available at many local United Campus Ministry offices).
- "The Constitutionality of Laws Forbidding Private Homosexual Conduct." *Michigan Law Review* 72: 1613-1637 (Aug. 1974).
- Dunbar, John et al. "Some Correlates of Attitudes Toward Homosexuality." *J. of Social Psychology* 89: 271-279 (1973).
- Dworkin, Ronald. "Lord Devlin and the Enforcement of Morals." *Yale Law Journal* 75: 986-1005 (1966). Also in: *ETHICS*, ed. by Judith Thomson & Gerald Dworkin, Harper & Row, 1968.
- Ford, Clellan and Beach, Frank. "Homosexual Behavior." In their: *PATTERNS OF SEXUAL BEHAVIOR*, Harper & Row, 1951.
- Freedman, Mark. "Homosexuals May Be Healthier Than Straights." *Psychology Today*, March 1975. (Psychology Today Readers Service, Attn: Pam Ludwig, Box 700, Del Mar, CA 92014, article 50c).
- Gutttag, Bianca. "Homophobia in Library School." In: *REVOLTING LIBRARIANS*, ed. by Celeste West and Elizabeth Katz, Booklegger Press, 1972. (Book \$2 prepaid from Booklegger Press, 555 29th, San Francisco, CA 94131).
- "Homosexual Doctors: Their Place and Influence in Medicine Today." *Medical World News*, Jan. 25, 1974, 41-51. (Available at most medical libraries).
- Johnson, Eric W. "Homosexuality — Being 'Gay'." In his: *LOVE AND SEX IN PLAIN LANGUAGE* (New Rev. Ed.), Lippincott, 1974, also Bantam paper ed. [Grades 7-12].
- Kameny, Franklin E. "Gay Liberation and Psychiatry." *Psychiatric Opinion*, Feb. 1971, 18-27. Also in: *THE HOMOSEXUAL DIALECTIC*, ed. by Joseph A. McCaffrey, Prentice-Hall, 1972, also Spectrum paper ed.
- Kitsuse, John I. "Societal Reaction to Deviant Behavior: Problems of Theory and Method." In: *THE OTHER SIDE: PERSPECTIVES ON DEVIANCE*, ed. by Howard S. Becker, Free Press-Macmillan, 1964.
- Klein, Carole. "Homosexual Parents." In her: *THE SINGLE PARENT EXPERIENCE*, Walker, 1973, also Avon paper ed.
- Kopkind, Andrew. "The Boys in the Barracks (Homosexuals and the Military)." *New Times*, Aug. 8, 1975, 19-27. (New Times, 1 Park Ave., NYC, NY 10016, issue \$1).
- "The Legality of Homosexual Marriage." *Yale Law Journal* 82: 573-589 (1973).
- LeShan, Eda J. "Homosexuality." In her: *NATURAL PARENTHOOD: RAISING YOUR CHILD WITHOUT A SCRIPT*, Signet, 1970.
- Lester, Elenore. "Gays in the Synagogue." *Present Tense: The Magazine of World Jewish Affairs*, Autumn 1974. (Present Tense, 165 E. 56, NYC, NY 10022, issue \$2).
- Lyon, Phyllis and Martin, Del. "The Realities of Lesbianism." In: *THE NEW WOMEN: A MOTIVATIONAL ANTHOLOGY OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION*, ed. by Joanne Cooke et al., Bobbs-Merrill, 1970, also Fawcett Premier paper ed. Also in: *LESBIANS SPEAK OUT*, by Women's Press Collective, Women's Press, 1974.
- Marmor, Judd. "Homosexuality and Cultural Value Systems." *Amer. J. Psychiatry* 130: 1208-1209 (Nov. 1973).



- Martin, Del and Lyon, Phyllis. "Lesbian Mothers." *MS*, Oct. 1973, 78-80. (MS. Magazine Reprint Dept., 370 Lexington, NYC, NY 10017, article \$1).
- Martin, Del and Mariah, Paul. "Homosexual Love — Woman to Woman, Man to Man." In: *LOVE TODAY: A NEW EXPLORATION*, ed. by Herbert A. Otto, Association Press, 1972, also Delta paper ed.
- McNeill, John. "The Homosexual and the Church." *National Catholic Reporter*, Oct. 5, 1973, 7. (Copies for \$1 from Rev. John J. McNeill, S.J., 220 W. 98, NYC, NY 10025).
- Messer, Henry D. "The Homosexual as a Physician." In: *HUMAN SEXUALITY: A HEALTH PRACTITIONER'S TEXT*, ed. by Richard Green, Williams & Wilkins, 1975.
- Pittenger, W. Norman. "The Homosexual Expression of Sexuality." In his: *MAKING SEXUALITY HUMAN*, Pilgrim—United Church Press, 1970.
- Pittenger, Norman. "Homosexuality and the Christian Tradition." *Christianity & Crisis*, Aug. 5, 1974, 178-181. (Christianity & Crisis, 537 W. 121, NYC, NY 10027, issue 45c, 11+ copies 36c each).
- Pittenger, Norman. "A Theological Approach to Understanding Homosexuality." *Religion in Life*, Winter 1974, 436-444.
- (Ramsey, Judith, as told to). "My Daughter Is Different." *Family Circle*, Nov. 1974. (Family Circle, 488 Madison, NYC, NY 10022, article 25c).
- "Security Clearances for Homosexuals." *Stanford Law Review* 25: 403-429 (Feb. 1973).
- Smith, Kenneth T. "Homophobia: a Tentative Personality Profile." *Psychological Reports* 29:1091-1094 (1971).
- Szasz, Thomas S. "The Product Conversion — from Heresy to Illness" and "The Model Psychiatric Scapgoat — the Homosexual." In his: *THE MANUFACTURE OF MADNESS*, Harper & Row, 1970, also Delta paper ed.
- WE'LL DO IT OURSELVES: COMBATTING SEXISM IN EDUCATION. Includes articles: "The Oppression of Gay People," "Literature and Our Gay Minority," "The Gay Student Group," "Afterthought: Lesbians as Gays and as Women," "The Acanfora Case." (Published by Student Committee, Study Commission on Undergraduate Education & the Education of Teachers, 1974; book available for \$1 from Nebraska Curriculum Development Center, Andrews Hall, Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68508).
- "What Is Homosexuality?" In: *WHAT TO TELL YOUR CHILD ABOUT SEX*, prepared by The Child Study Association of America — Wel-Met Inc., Pocket Books, 1974 (Rev.).
- Wolf, Steve. "Sex and the Single Cataloguer." In: *REVOLTING LIBRARIANS*, ed. by Celeste West and Elizabeth Katz, Booklegger Press, 1972. (Book \$2 prepaid from Booklegger Press, 555 29th, San Francisco, CA 94131).
- Zoglin, Richard. "The Homosexual Executive." *MBA (Master in Business Administration)*, July-Aug. 1974, 26-31. (MBA, 555 Madison, NYC, NY 10022, article 25c).
- Bender, David and McCuen, Gary. *DETERMINING FAMILY AND SEXUAL ROLES*. [Class simulation game, grades 7-12. Esp. Activity 1: "Comparing Alternative Family Structures" and Activity 4: "Analyzing Gay Rights."] Greenhaven Press, 1973. (Greenhaven Press, Box 831, Anoka, MN 55303, \$1.35 each, 95c each for schools.)
- Blair, Ralph, ed. *THE OTHERWISE MONOGRAPHS SERIES*. National Task Force on Student Personnel Services & Homosexuality, 1972. 15 pamphlets, \$20. (List of titles from Homosexual Community Counseling Center, 30 E. 60, NYC, NY 10022.)
- Blamires, David. *HOMOSEXUALITY FROM THE INSIDE*. London: Social Responsibility Council of the Religious Society of Friends, 1973. (Friends Book Store, 156 N. 15, Phila., PA. 19102, 95c plus p&h 30c single copy, 50c p&h 2 or more.)
- Buffum, Peter C. *HOMOSEXUALITY IN PRISONS*. National Institute of Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice, 1972. (Supt. of Documents, Govt. Printing Office, Wash., DC 20402, stock No. 2700-0145, 65c.)
- Crew, Louie, ed. *MARGINS SPECIAL FOCUS: GAY MALE WRITING AND PUBLISHING*. *Margins* issue No. 20, May 1975. (Margins, 2912 N. Hackett, Milwaukee, WI 53211, \$1 prepaid.)
- Crew, Louie and Norton, Rictor, eds. *THE HOMOSEXUAL IMAGINATION*. Special issue of *College English*, Nov. 1974. (Natl. Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon, Urbana, IL 61804, \$2.)
- Fairchild, Betty. *PARENTS OF GAYS*. Parents of Gays (Wash., DC), 1975 (Rev.). (Lambda Rising, 1724 20th NW, Wash., DC 20009, \$1 plus 35c p&h, 10 or more copies 60c each plus 35c p&h per order.)
- Fluckiger, Fritz A. *RESEARCH THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY: AN EVALUATION OF THE BIBER STUDY ON HOMOSEXUALITY*. Privately printed, 1966. (Barbara Gittings, Box 2383, Phila., PA 19103, \$1 prepaid.)
- Gay Academic Union. *THE UNIVERSITIES AND THE GAY EXPERIENCE*. Proceedings of the first Gay Academic Union conference, Nov. 1973, New York City. Gay Academic Union, 1974. (GAU Publications Committee, Box 1479, Hunter College, NYC, NY 10021, \$2 prepaid.)
- Gramick, Jeannine et al. *CATHOLIC HOMOSEXUALS: A PRIMER FOR DISCUSSION*. Dignity, 1975 (Sept.). (Dignity National, 755 Boylston, Boston, MA 02116, price to be set.)
- Hodges, Beth, ed. *MARGINS SPECIAL FOCUS: LESBIAN WRITING AND PUBLISHING*. *Margins* issue No. 23, Aug. 1975. (Margins, 2912 N. Hackett, Milwaukee, WI 53211, \$1 prepaid.)
- HOMOSEXUALITY. *SIECUS Study Guide No. 2* (Rev. Ed.). Sex Information & Education Council of the U.S., 1973. (Behavioral Publications, 72 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10011, \$1 prepaid; \$1.75 if billed; quantity discount available.)
- Kameny, Franklin E. *ACTION ON THE GAY LEGAL FRONT*. National Gay Task Force, 1975 (fall). (Natl. Gay Task Force, 80 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10011, \$1.50.)
- Lee, Ronald D. et al. *GAY MEN SPEAK*. Multi Media Resource Center, 1973, illus. (Multi Media Resource Center, 540 Powell, San Francisco, CA 94108, \$1.95.)
- Martin, Del and Lyon, Phyllis. *LESBIAN LOVE AND LIBERATION*. Multi Media Resource Center, 1973, illus. (Multi Media Resource Center, 540 Powell, San Francisco, CA 94108, \$1.95.)
- MOTIVE: GAY MEN'S LIBERATION ISSUE. Motive, Inc., 1972, illus. (Natl. Gay Student Center, 2115 S St. NW, Wash., DC 20008, \$1 prepaid, \$1.50 if billed.)
- MOTIVE: LESBIAN FEMINIST ISSUE. Motive, Inc., 1972, illus. (Natl. Gay Student Center, 2115 S St. NW, Wash., DC 20008, \$1 prepaid, \$1.50 if billed.)

(continued)

(PAMPHLETS continued)

National Council of Churches. A RESOLUTION ON CIVIL RIGHTS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AS TO AFFECTIONAL OR SEXUAL PREFERENCE. Natl. Council of Churches of Christ, USA, March 6, 1975. (Natl. Council of Churches, Rm. 711, 475 Riverside Dr., NYC, NY 10027, single copy free for stamped reply envelope, bulk orders by arrangement.)

A NEW FACE FOR LOVE. The Gay Imperative, 1974, illus. (Gay House, Box 3596, Upper Nicolet St., Minneapolis, MN 55403, free for stamped reply envelope.)

PACKET OF RESOLUTIONS AND STATEMENTS RE: HOMOSEXUALITY. Includes: Amer. Anthropological Assn., Amer. Bar Assn., Amer. Civil Liberties Union, Amer. Federation of Teachers, Amer. Library Assn., Amer. Psychiatric Assn., Amer. Psychological Assn., Calif. Federation of Teachers, Natl. Council of Churches, Natl. Education Assn., Natl. Federation of Priests Councils [Roman Catholic], Natl. Organization for Women, U.S. Civil Service Commission, Washington (DC) Board of Education, etc. (Natl. Gay Task Force, 80 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10011, \$2 prepaid.)

Sindt, David. GAY MEN AND FOSTER CARE. National Conference on Social Welfare, 1974. (NCSW Publications Office, 22 W. Gay, Columbus, OH 43215, \$1 NCSW members, \$2 non-members, plus 25c p&h.)

THEOLOGICAL-PASTORAL RESOURCES. Collection of Catholic-oriented articles. (Dignity National, 755 Boylston, Boston, MA 02116, \$1 prepaid.)

TWENTY QUESTIONS ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY. Gay Activists Alliance of New York, 1972. (GAA, Box 2, Village Sta., NYC, NY 10014, 50c plus 25c p&h, 10 or more copies 25c each plus 50c p&h per order.)

United States Civil Service Commission. PRESS RELEASE ON NEW GUIDELINES FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT. [Includes major policy change to require judging homosexual and heterosexual conduct by same standard.] U.S. Civil Service Commission, July 3, 1975. (Copies for 25c from Natl. Gay Task Force, 80 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10011.)

WORKFORCE: GAY WORKERS OUT OF THE CLOSET. Gay issue of *Workforce*, Sept.-Oct. 1974. (Vocations for Social Change, 5951 Canning, Oakland, CA 94609, 85c prepaid, bulk discount available.)

PERIODICALS

Code for subscription rates: X — individual; L — libraries and institutions; G — gay and lesbian/feminist organizations; P — prisoners and state-hospital patients.

THE ADVOCATE. National newsmagazine. 2121 S. El Camino Real, San Mateo, CA 94403. Biweekly. All USA subs, \$9 1 yr., \$16 2 yrs.; Canada & Mexico, \$10 1 yr., \$18 2 yrs. Sample, 50c. Microfilm ed. from Univ. of So. Calif. Library.

ALFA NEWSLETTER. Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance. Box 7684, Atlanta, GA 30309. Monthly. X, \$2, free with \$5 membership in ALFA; L, \$5; G, exchange; P (women), free. Sample, two 10c stamps.

ALICE REPORTS. Publication of the Alice B. Toklas Memorial Democratic Club. Box 77542, San Francisco, CA 94107. Monthly. X, L & P, \$5; G, same or exchange. Sample, free.

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION GAY CAUCUS NEWSLETTER. In care of R. Pillard, M.D., 700 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA 02118. Approx. 4 issues yearly. X, free to APA members, others \$2; L, \$3; G, \$2. Sample, free to mental health professionals, others 50c.

THE BARB. Serving the Southeast. Box 7922, Atlanta, GA 30309. Monthly. X, \$4; L & G, same, limited quantities available for free distribution; also G, exchange; P, free. Sample, 25c.

THE BODY POLITIC. Gay Liberation Journal. Box 7289, Sta. A, Toronto, Ont., Canada M5W 1X9. Bimonthly. X & L in Canada, \$2.50, \$3.50 1st class; X & L in USA, \$4, \$5 1st class; G, exchange; P, free. Sample, free. Microfilm ed. from McLaren Micropublishing.

THE CELLMATE. Board of Prison Ministry, Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. 1046 S. Hill, Los Angeles, CA 90015. Bimonthly. All subs free but donation requested from X, L & G.

CHICAGO GAY CRUSADER. Gay news of Chicago & Illinois. Box 872, Chicago, IL 60690. Monthly. X&L, 6 issues \$3, 12 issues \$6; G, same or exchange; P, free. Sample, 50c.

COMING OUT. United Methodist Gay Caucus Newsletter. 1784 Gazette Way, Hayward, CA 94541. Irregular. All subs free but donation requested.

COMMUNITY NEWS. Gay paper of North Texas. Box 7367, Ft. Worth, TX 76111. Monthly. X, \$4 1st class, \$3 3rd class; L, G & P, free. Sample, 25c.

CONTACT. National gay newspaper. Box 70282, Houston, TX 77007. Every 3rd Wednesday. X, L & G in USA, \$7, \$12 1st class, \$18 airmail; P, free (limit 2 per institution); Canada, \$9, \$12 1st class, \$18 airmail; Mexico, 100 pesos, 150 pesos 1st class, 230 pesos airmail; other countries, \$20(US). Sample, 75c.

DESPERATE LIVING. Lesbian newsletter. Box 7124, Baltimore, MD 21218. Quarterly. X & G, 6 issues \$3; L, 6 issues \$10; P (women), free. Sample, 25c.

DIGNITY. National publication of the gay Catholic community. 755 Boylston, Rm. 514, Boston, MA 02116. Monthly. X, \$15; L, \$25; G, \$15 or exchange; P, free. Sample, free.

THE EMPTY CLOSET. Gay newspaper for Rochester—Genesee Valley. 713 Monroe, Rochester, NY 14607. 11 issues yearly. X, \$4; L, \$4 except free in NY State; G, exchange; P, free. Sample, 25c.

FAG RAG. Gay male quarterly. Box 331, Kenmore Sta., Boston, MA 02215. Quarterly. X & L, 12 issues \$7; G, exchange; P and military, free; foreign, 12 issues \$7 seamount, \$12 airmail. Sample, 50c. Microfilm ed. from University Microfilms.

FIFTH FREEDOM. Publication of the Buffalo gay community. Box 975, Ellicott Sta., Buffalo, NY 14205. 11 issues yearly. X & L, \$5 3rd class, \$7.50 1st class; G, same or exchange; P, free; Canada, \$7.50 1st class only. Sample, 60c.

FOCUS. Journal for gay women. 419 Boylston, Rm. 323, Boston, MA 02116. Monthly. X & L, \$6; G, same or exchange; P (women), free; Canada & Mexico, \$6; other countries, \$7 surface, \$10 airmail. Sample, 60c. Microfilm ed. inquire Women's History Research Center, 2325 Oak, Berkeley, CA 94708.

GPU NEWS. National news and features for gay women & men. Box 90530, Milwaukee, WI 53202. Monthly. X, L & G, \$5; P, free; Canada, \$7.50; Europe, \$8.50. Sample, \$1.

GAITY. Reflecting gay life in the South. Box 3620, Memphis, TN 38103. Monthly. X, L & P, 6 issues \$3, 12 issues \$6; G, same or exchange. Sample, 50c.

THE GAY ALTERNATIVE. Gay liberation journal. 232 South St., Phila., PA 19147. Quarterly. X & L, 6 issues \$3, \$10 sealed, \$15 airmail; P, free. Sample, 75c.

THE GAY BLADE. Serving Greater Washington. DC. 1724 20th NW, Wash., DC 20009. Monthly. All USA subs, \$5; foreign, \$10. Sample, 50c.

THE GAY CHRISTIAN. Theological journal of Metropolitan Community Church. Box 1757, GPO, NYC, NY 10001. Quarterly. X & L 12 issues \$5, \$7 1st class; G, same or exchange; P, free. Sample, 50c.

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS (GCN). Gay weekly for the Northeast. 22 Bromfield, Boston, MA 02108. Weekly. X, L & G, 10 wks. \$2.50. 25 wks. \$6, 52 wks. \$12; P, free. Sample, 25c.

SUPPLEMENT — SUMMER 1976

to: A GAY BIBLIOGRAPHY — 5th Edition — Summer 1975

This Supplement has information changes for items listed in the bibliography, plus new listings.

New listings are marked with an asterisk (*).

BOOKS

- Boggan, THE RIGHTS OF GAY PEOPLE. Now in Dutton cloth ed.
- * Brown, Howard. FAMILIAR FACES, HIDDEN LIVES: THE STORY OF HOMOSEXUAL MEN IN AMERICA TODAY. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Oct. 1976.
- * Crew, Louie, ed. THE GAY ACADEMIC. ETC Publications, Jan. 1977.
- * Jay, Karla and Young, Allen, eds. AFTER YOU'RE OUT: PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF GAY MEN AND LESBIAN WOMEN. Links (Quick Fox), 1975, paper orig.
- * Katz, Jonathan. A GAY AMERICAN HISTORY: LESBIANS AND GAY MEN IN THE U.S.A.: A DOCUMENTARY ACCOUNT. Thos. Y. Crowell, Nov. 1976.
- * McNeill, John J. THE CHURCH AND THE HOMOSEXUAL. Sheed Andrews & McMeel (formerly Sheed & Ward), Sept. 1976.
- * Mickley, Richard. CHRISTIAN SEXUALITY. Universal Fellowship Press, 1975, paper orig.; rev. ed. Aug. 1976, cloth & paper eds. (Universal Fellowship Press, Box 36277, Los Angeles, CA 90036.)
- * Robinson, Paul. THE MODERNIZATION OF SEX. Harper & Row, 1976.
- Rule. LESBIAN IMAGES. Now in Pocket Books paper ed.
- Tripp. THE HOMOSEXUAL MATRIX. Now in Signet paper ed.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND DIRECTORIES

- * Bullough, Vern L. et al. AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HOMOSEXUALITY. Garland, Oct. 1976. Approx. 13,000 entries, 1,000 pp., 2 vols. Garland Publishing, 545 Madison, NYC, NY 10022, \$75.
- Damon. THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE. New price for individuals only, \$7.
- GAY BOOKSTORES. 2nd ed. Summer 1976.
- * GAY RIGHTS PROTECTIONS IN U.S. & CANADA. List of legislative changes, updated monthly. Natl. Gay Task Force, 80 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10011, free for stamped reply envelope.
- * Lotman, Loretta and Wilson, Owen. LESBIAN AND GAY MALE THEATER RESOURCES. 2nd ed., Sept. 1976. Approx. 75 plays, 30 theaters. Lesbian & Gay Male Theater Resources, c/o Mattachine Society, 59 Christopher, NYC, NY 10014, 25¢.
- STUDENT GAY GROUPS. 4th ed. Summer 1976.

ARTICLES

- * "The Avowed Lesbian Mother and Her Right to Child Custody: A Constitutional Challenge That Can No Longer Be Denied." *San Diego Law Review* 12:799-864 (July 1975). (San Diego Law Review, Univ. of San Diego School of Law, Alcalá Park, San Diego, CA 92110, issue \$3.)
- * Hancek, Frances and Cunningham, John. "Can Young Gays Find Happiness in YA Books?" *Wilson Library Bulletin*, March 1976, 528-534. (Article reprint 50¢ prepaid from ALA/SRR Task Force on Gay Liberation, Box 2383, Phila., PA 19103.)
- * Henry, Patrick. "Homosexuals: Identity and Dignity." *Theology Today*, April 1976, 33-39.
- * Hunter, Nan and Polikoff, Nancy. "Custody Rights of Lesbian Mothers: Legal Theory and Litigation Strategy." *Buffalo Law Review*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Spring 1976). (Article reprint 85¢ prepaid from Lesbian Mothers National Defense Fund, 2446 Lorentz Pl. N., Seattle, WA 98109.)
- * Klaich, Dolores. "Parents Who Are Gay." *New Times*, July 23, 1976, 34-42.
- * LaMorte, Michael W. "Legal Rights and Responsibilities of Homosexuals in Public Education." *J. of Law and Education* 4:449-467 (July 1975).
- * Lawrence, John C. "Homosexuals, Hospitalization and the Nurse." *Nursing Forum*, Summer 1975, 305-317.
- * Rashe, Richard. "Homosexuality and the Church of Today." *National Catholic Reporter*, March 26, April 2, 9, & 23, 1976. (Series reprint 25¢ prepaid from Dignity National, 755 Boylston, Rm. 413, Boston, MA 02116.)
- * Sage, Wayne. "Inside the Colossal Closet." [Gay bars] *Human Behavior*, Aug. 1975, 16-23. (Human Behavior, 12031 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90025, issue \$2.50.)
- * Secor, Cynthia. "Lesbians: The Doors Open." *Change*, Feb. 1975, 13-17. Also in: WOMEN ON CAMPUS: THE UNFINISHED LIBERATION, from the editors of *Change*, 1975. (Change, NBW Tower, New Rochelle, NY 10801, book \$3.50.)

PAMPHLETS

- * CORPORATE BUSINESS SUPPORT STATEMENTS PACKET. [Letters declaring non-discrimination in employment from IBM, Bank of America, AT&T, CBS, Eastern Airlines, McDonald's, etc.] (Natl. Gay Task Force, 80 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10011, \$1 prepaid.)
- * GAY MILITARY COUNSELOR'S MANUAL. Gay Center for Social Services of San Diego, 1976. (GCSS, 2250 B St., San Diego, CA 92102, \$9.)
- * GAY PARENT SUPPORT PACKET. [Statements on gay parents' custody & visitation rights, from Dr. Evelyn Hooker, Dr. Benjamin Spock, Dr. Wardell Pomeroy, others.] (Natl. Gay Task Force, 80 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10011, \$1 prepaid.)
- Gramick. CATHOLIC HOMOSEXUALS. \$1.50 prepaid.
- * Hodges, Beth, ed. SINISTER WISDOM SPECIAL FOCUS: LESBIAN FEMINIST WRITING AND PUBLISHING. *Sinister Wisdom*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Nov. 1976. (Sinister Wisdom, 3116 Country Club Dr., Charlotte, NC 28205, \$2 prepaid.)
- Kameny. ACTION ON THE GAY LEGAL FRONT. Not available.
- * THE OPERATION SOCRATES HANDBOOK. Federation of Students, Univ. of Waterloo, 1973, illus. (Waterloo Universities Gay Liberation Movement, Univ. of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ont., Canada N2L 3G1, 1-10 copies 35¢ each prepaid (no U.S. stamps); also bulk rates.)
- * Raico, Ralph. GAY RIGHTS: A LIBERTARIAN APPROACH. MacBride for President Committee, 1976. (MacBride for President Committee, 1516 P. St. NW, Wash., DC 20005, 50¢ prepaid.)
- THEOLOGICAL-PASTORAL RESOURCES. \$1.50 prepaid.
- * WORKING PAPER ON HOMOSEXUALITY. Pacific Yearly Meeting (Friends) Ministry & Oversight Committee, 1975. (Friends Book Store, 156 N. 15th, Phila., PA 19102, \$1 plus 50¢ p/h.)

PERIODICALS

Reminder: Items not marked with * are information changes; cross-check with original listing in bibliography.

- THE ADVOCATE. (As of Sept. 1, 1976) One Peninsula Pl., Bldg. 1730, Suite 2225, San Mateo, CA 94402. All USA subs, \$12 1 yr., \$21 2 yrs.; Canada & Mexico add \$1 per yr., other countries add \$3.
- ALFA NEWSLETTER. Box 5502, Atlanta, GA 30307. X, \$3, free with \$6 membership; L, \$6. Sample, 2 13¢ stamps.
- ALICE REPORTS. Box 11316, San Francisco, CA 94101.
- * ARMED FORCES INFORMER. News of gays & the military services. AAFB, Box 1863, Pensacola, FL 32589. Monthly. All subs free but generally sent only to past & present service members and other individuals with special interest.
- THE BARB. Zip 30357. \$5 3rd class, \$8 1st class. Sample, 50¢.
- * BLAIR BLURBS. National newsletter of United Methodist Gay Caucus. c/o Keith Spare, 2 Janssen Pl., Kansas City, MO 64109. Quarterly. X & G, \$5; L, \$10; P, free. Sample, 25¢.
- THE BODY POLITIC. 10 issues/yr. Canadian subs, 1st class \$4.50/5 issues, \$8/10; 2nd class \$2.75/5, \$4.50/10. American subs, 1st class \$6/5, \$10.50/10; 2nd class \$4/5, \$7/10. Internatl., air \$10/10, surface \$7/10.
- THE CELLMATE. For women & men in state & federal prisons. Board of Prison Ministry of MCC, Box 36277, Los Angeles, CA 90036. 6-8 issues/yr. Free to prisoners; donations requested from X, L, G. (Also included in IN UNITY, which see.)
- * CHRISTOPHER STREET. National gay magazine for men & women. 60 W. 13, NYC, NY 10011. Monthly. All subs, \$12.50. Sample, \$2.
- * COME OUT FIGHTING. Newspaper of the Lavender & Red Union. Box 3503, Hollywood, CA 90028. Monthly. X & G, \$2.50; L, \$4; foreign, \$4. Sample, 25¢.
- COMING OUT. See BLAIR BLURBS.
- COMMUNITY NEWS [Texas]. Temp. suspended.
- CONTACT [Houston]. Defunct.
- * CONTACT. National publication of Evangelicals Concerned International. Box 31299, Miami, FL 33133. Monthly. X & L, \$10; G, exchange; P, free; foreign, \$10. Sample, free.
- THE EMPTY CLOSET. 1255 University Ave., Rochester, NY 14610. X & L, \$5 1st class, \$3 3rd class.
- * ESPRIT. Magazine of interest to gay women & men. 474 Dundas St. E., Toronto, Ont., Canada. Monthly. X, L & G, \$15 in USA & Canada, \$20 (Canadian) in England & Europe, \$22 (Canadian) in Australia & New Zealand; P, free. Sample, \$1.

- * FREE PRESS. Newsmagazine serving the South. Box 2550, Charlotte, NC 28234. Biweekly. X, L & P, \$6; G, exchange. Sample, free.
 - * FRIENDS COMMITTEE FOR GAY CONCERNS NEWSLETTER. For gay & concerned Friends (Quakers). c/o Pamela Hitchcock, 1515 Cherry, Phila., PA 19102. Irregular. Domestic subs free (G, exchange) but donations needed; foreign, \$10.
 - GPU NEWS. Box 92203, Milwaukee, WI 53202. All foreign subs, \$6.
 - GAIETY. X, L & P, \$6 3rd class, \$9 1st class. Sample, 50¢ except free to any gay group in South.
 - THE GAY ALTERNATIVE. Box 1294, Phila., PA 19105. 6 issues \$3.50.
 - THE GAY BLADE. Re-named THE BLADE. Serving Wash.-Balto. area, 2430 Penna. Ave. NW, Suite 209, Wash., DC 20037.
 - THE GAY CHRISTIAN. Box 36277, Los Angeles, CA 90036. 6-8 issues/yr. All subs, \$10. Sample, \$1. (Also included in IN UNITY, which see.)
 - GAY COMMUNITY NEWS. 10 wks. \$4, 25 wks. \$8, 52 wks. \$15. Sample, 35¢.
 - * GAY HEALTH REPORTS. Newsletter of Gay Public Health Workers, a caucus of the Amer. Public Health Assn. 206 N. 35th, Phila., PA 19104. Quarterly. X & G, \$2; L, \$5; P, free. Sample, stamped reply envelope.
 - GAY LIBERATOR. Defunct.
 - * GAY LIFE. Gay news covering Chicago metropolitan area. 205 W. Wacker, Suite 1416, Chicago, IL 60606. Biweekly. X, \$6 half yr., \$10 full yr.; L, G & P, free; foreign, same as X. Sample, \$1.
 - THE GAY LUTHERAN. Box 19114A, Los Angeles, CA 90019. All subs, \$8.
 - GAY NEWS [England]. USA & Canada: unsealed seaiml \$14/12 issues, \$23/24; sealed seaiml \$20/12, \$38/24; unsealed airmail \$20/12, \$38/24; sealed airmail \$30/12, \$58/24. Sample (USA & Canada), \$1 unsealed seaiml, \$1.50 sealed seaiml, \$1.50 unsealed airmail, \$2.50 sealed airmail.
 - GAY PEOPLE IN THE LABOR FORCE. Defunct.
 - * GAY RIGHTS '77. Political newsletter for & about Oregon's gay community. Portland Town Council, 320 SW Stark, Rm. 303, Portland, OR 97204. Monthly. All subs free but donations appreciated. Sample, 13¢ stamp.
 - GAY SUNSHINE. X & G, 12 issues \$10, \$15 1st class; foreign, 12 issues \$13.
 - GAY TIDE. Box 1463, Sia. A, Vancouver, BC, Canada.
 - * GAYS ON THE HILL. News of gay civil rights progress in US Congress. Suite 210, 110 Maryland Ave. NE, Wash., DC 20002. Occasional. All subs by donation. Sample, 2 13¢ stamps.
 - GAYZETTE. Box 13420, Phila., PA 19101. 26 wks. \$6, 52 wks. \$10.
 - * GWMR MONITOR. What gays are doing about the media—and vice versa. Gays' & Women's Alliance for Responsible Media, Box 48, Dept. J, GPO, Brooklyn, NY 11202. Irregular. Subs to members only, \$15. Sample, \$1.
 - HOLD HANDS. Temp. suspended. Substitute: INSIDE GAANJ, newsletter. Same address. Sub rates same except X, \$5.
 - IN UNITY. News & opinion journal of Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. Includes CELLMATE and GAY CHRISTIAN. Box 36277, Los Angeles, CA 90036. 6-8 issues/yr. All subs \$10 (G may exchange). Sample, \$1.
 - INTEGRITY. Box 2516, Chicago, IL 60690. X, \$10, \$13 airmail.
 - IT'S TIME. 10 issues/yr.
 - * JOIN HANDS. Gay prisoners' news. Box 42242, San Francisco, CA 94142. Bimonthly. X & L, \$4; G, open; P, free. Sample, 25¢.
 - JOURNAL OF HOMOSEXUALITY. Haworth Press, 174 5th Ave., NYC, NY 10010.
 - LAVENDER WOMAN. Defunct.
 - LESBIAN CONNECTION. X (women), free; L, \$13; G, free; P (women), free; foreign, \$2.
 - THE LESBIAN TIDE. c/o Woman's Bldg., 1727 N. Spring, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Bimonthly. X & G, \$5.
 - LESBIAN VOICES. All USA subs, \$5; foreign, \$10. Sample, \$1.50.
 - LONG TIME COMING. Box 128, Sia. G, Montreal.
 - * LOUISIANA GAY BLADE. Newsletter of the gay community. Box 1583, Alexandria, LA 71301. Monthly. X & L, \$5; G, exchange. Sample, 50¢.
 - * MAINE GAY TASK FORCE NEWSLETTER. Journal of news & opinion by Maine lesbians & gay men. Box 4542, Portland, ME 04112. Monthly. X, L & G, \$4; P, free; foreign, additional postage. Sample, free.
 - NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF GAY PSYCHOLOGISTS. Box 29527, Atlanta, GA 30359.
 - * NEWSLETTER OF LIBERTARIANS FOR GAY RIGHTS. 1206 NW 40th, Oklahoma City, OK 73118. 6-10 issues/yr. X, \$5; L, G & P \$3. Sample, free.
 - NEWSWEST. The gay newspaper. All USA subs, \$7.50/26 issues, \$12.50/52; foreign, \$9.75/26, \$18/52. Sample, \$1 USA, \$2 foreign.
 - NORTHWEST GAY REVIEW. 215 W. Burnside. No free subs to P.
 - OHIO EAST GAY NEWS. New rates same as PHILA. GAY NEWS, which see.
 - * OUT AND ABOUT. Seattle lesbian-feminist newsletter. 110 Boylston E., Seattle, WA 98102. Monthly. X, \$3; L, \$5; G, \$3 or exchange; P (women), free; foreign, \$5. Sample, 25¢.
 - * PHILADELPHIA GAY NEWS. Gay paper for eastern Penna., New Jersey, Delaware. Box 10236, Pittsburgh, PA 15232. Monthly. X & L, \$6 3rd class, \$11 1st class; G, \$6 or exchange; P, free; foreign, \$15. Sample, \$1.
 - PITTSBURGH GAY NEWS. New rates same as PHILA. GAY NEWS, which see.
 - POINT BLANK TIMES. Box 14643, Houston, TX 77021.
 - PRESBYTERIAN GAY CAUCUS NEWSLETTER. 10 issues/yr. G, \$5; no P mailing.
 - RFD. Magazine by & for country faggots everywhere. 4525 Lower Wolf Creek Rd., Wolf Creek, OR 97497. X, \$4, \$6 1st class; L & G, \$8; P, free; foreign, \$4.50. Sample, \$1.
 - * SAN DIEGO SON. Gay news magazine. Box 813, Santee, CA 92071. Biweekly. X, \$4/12 issues, \$6/24; L, free; G, exchange. Sample, free.
 - SAN FRANCISCO SENTINEL. 12 Sharon, San Francisco, CA 94114.
 - * SEATTLE GAY NEWS. Published by Seattle Gay Community Center. 110 Boylston E., Seattle, WA 98102. Monthly. All subs free (donations welcome).
 - SEXUALAWREPORTER. Reporting on legal developments in sex-related law.
 - SIGNAL. Box 17593, San Diego, CA 92117. Irregular. All subs by donation. Sample, 25¢.
- ### AUDIO-VISUALS
- GAY PEOPLE/STRAIGHT HEALTH CARE. Remaining in slides/cassette format; new sections being added on death and dying & on community nursing; new total 25 mins.; available Oct. 1976. Gay Nurses Alliance, Box 17593, San Diego, CA 92117, prices to be set.
 - * THE NURSE AND HOMOSEXUALITY, by Warren J. Deacon et al., 1975. (Part 7 of "Human Sexuality and Nursing Practice" program.) Color filmstrip with audiocassette, 21 mins. Concept Media, 1500 Adams Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626, sale \$65.
 - Effective, provocative training material, good also for non-medical audiences—esp. second episode. First episode shows reactions of hospital workers to a gay patient. The second deals sensitively with social pressures gay people face on and off the job, and the distancing some closeted gays resort to.
 - * WHAT ABOUT MCBRIDE? by Tom Lazarus, 1974. 16mm film, color, sound, 14 mins. CRM/McGraw-Hill Films, Princeton Rd., Hightstown, NJ 08520, rental \$20, sale \$195.
- Two teenage boys planning a rafting trip want a third partner. They discuss and even argue over McBride, who one of them thinks is "queer." Ending tests non-gays' attitudes. Great discussion starter.
- * WHAT'S NORMAL: AN EXPLORATION OF HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE GAY SUBCULTURE IN OUR SOCIETY, by Frieda Werden and Stewart Wilber, 1976. Thirteen 25-min. radio shows. KUT-FM, Box 7158, Univ. of Texas, Austin, TX 78712, cassettes \$5/program, \$50/series; open reel tapes, \$10 & \$100; rental available to radio stations.
- Good educational tools, covering a range of topics. Particularly fine discussions of homosexuality in cultural context & of gays in literature.
- * A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOUSE: A PORTRAIT OF ELAINE NOBLE, by Nancy Porter, 1975. Color videotape (may be put on film), 29 mins. WGBH Educational Foundation, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.
- Excellent documentary about openly gay Massachusetts legislator Elaine Noble. Her lesbianism is neither the overriding concern in her life nor is it shown as irrelevant or incidental. Human, humorous, inspiring.

For a copy of our list of "Gay Books in Format for the Blind and Physically Handicapped," send a request note and a stamped self-addressed envelope.

PERIODICALS continued)

- GAY LIBERATOR.** Paper of gay activism. Box 631-A, Detroit, MI 48232. Monthly. X, \$4; L, \$6; G, free if unable to pay; P, free; foreign, \$5. Sample, 50c.
- GAY LITERATURE.** Gay fiction & essays. c/o Daniel Curzon, English Dept., Calif. State Univ. - Fresno, Fresno, CA 93740. Quarterly. X, \$8, \$11 foreign; L, \$10, \$12 foreign; G, \$10. Sample, \$2.
- THE GAY LUTHERAN.** Newsletter of Lutherans Concerned for Gay People. Box 15592, Salt Lake City, UT 84115. Bimonthly. All subs, \$3. Sample, free.
- GAY NEWS.** Europe's largest-circulation gay newspaper. 1-A Normand Gardens, Greyhound Rd., London W14 9SB, England. Biweekly. X, L & G in USA & Canada, 13 issues \$28 sealed airmail, \$11.50 sealed seaimail, \$17.50 wrapped airmail, \$8.50 wrapped seaimail; 26 issues \$54.50 sealed airmail, \$22 sealed seaimail, \$33.50 wrapped airmail, \$16 wrapped seaimail. Sample (USA & Canada), \$2 sealed airmail.
- GAY PEOPLE AND MENTAL HEALTH.** Mental health newsletter. Suite 3-B, 490 West End Ave., NYC, NY 10024. Monthly. X, \$6; L, \$12; G, free or exchange; P, free. Sample, free.
- GAY PEOPLE IN THE LABOR FORCE.** Clearinghouse on the gay economic situation. Box 15826, Phila., PA 19103. Bimonthly. X, \$3; L, \$6; G, \$3 or exchange. Sample, free.
- GAY SUNSHINE.** Journal of gay liberation. Box 40397, San Francisco, CA 94140. Quarterly. X & G, 12 issues \$8, \$12 1st class; L, 12 issues \$10; P, free; foreign, 12 issues \$10. Sample, \$1.
- GAY SYNAGOGUE NEWS.** Publication of Congregation Beth Simchat Torah. Box 1270, GPO, NYC, NY 10001. Monthly. All subs free but donation requested. Sample, 25c.
- GAY TIDE.** Canadian gay liberation newspaper. 2146 Yew, Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Bimonthly. X, \$2; L, \$5; G, \$2 or exchange; P, free. Sample, 25c.
- GAYZETTE.** Greater Philadelphia area newspaper. Box 15786, Phila., PA 19103. Weekly. X & L, 26 wks. \$4, 52 wks. \$7.50; G, exchange; P, free. Sample, free.
- HOLD HANDS.** Magazine of Gay Activists Alliance of New Jersey. Box 1734, South Hackensack, NJ 07606. Monthly. X, \$6; L, G & P, free; foreign, \$8. Sample, free.
- HOMOSEXUAL COUNSELING JOURNAL.** Quarterly journal to the helping professions. 30 E. 60, NYC, NY 10022. Quarterly. X, \$10; L, G, \$15; P, free. Sample free to libraries only. Microfilm ed. from University Microfilms.
- IN UNITY.** Feature & news magazine of Metropolitan Community Church. 1046 S. Hill, Los Angeles, CA 90015. Quarterly. X & G, \$3; L, P, free. Sample, free.
- INTEGRITY.** Gay Episcopal forum. 701 Orange, No. 6, Fort Valley, GA 31030. 10 issues yearly. X, \$7, \$10 airmail; L, \$10; G, exchange; P, free; foreign, \$10. Sample, \$1.
- INTERCHANGE.** Magazine of the National Gay Student Center. 2115 St. NW, Wash., DC 20008. 4-5 times yearly. X, \$3; L, \$3 prepaid; G, \$3 or exchange; P, free; Canada, \$3; other countries, \$5. Sample, free (one only).
- IT'S TIME.** Newsletter of the National Gay Task Force. 80 5th Ave., Rm. 506, NYC, NY 10011. Bimonthly. X, free with \$15 membership in NGTF; L, \$15; G, free; foreign, \$15. Sample, 25c.
- JOURNAL OF HOMOSEXUALITY.** Journal for mental health & behavioral science professionals. Haworth Press, 130 W. 72, NYC, NY 10023. Quarterly. X, \$15; L, \$30; Canada, add \$2; other countries, add \$5. Sample, free to libraries (request on letterhead), others \$4.
- LAVENDER WOMAN.** Lesbian-feminist newspaper. Box 60206, Chicago, IL 60660. Bimonthly. X & G, \$4; L, \$8; P (women), free. Sample, \$6c. Microfilm ed. inquire Women's History Research Center, 2325 Oak, Berkeley, CA 94708.

- LESBIAN CONNECTION.** National lesbian journal. Ambitious Amazons Box 811 East Lansing, MI 48823. 8 times yearly. X (omen), free; L, \$5 3rd class, \$7.50 1st class; G, free; P (women), free; foreign, \$1.50 3rd class, \$2.50 1st class Canada & Mexico only. Sample, free.
- LESBIAN FRONT.** Newsletter for Mississippi-Southeastern lesbians. Box 8342, Jackson, MS 39204. Monthly. X, \$3.50, \$4 sealed; L, G, \$5; P (women), free. Sample, free for stamped reply envelope.
- THE LESBIAN TIDE.** Feminist lesbian national news journal. 1005 Ocean Ave., No. B, Santa Monica, CA 90403. Monthly. X & G, \$7.50; L, \$10; P, free but donation requested; foreign, \$10. Sample, \$1. Microfilm ed. from University Microfilms.
- LESBIAN VOICES.** Lesbian feminist quarterly. Box 3122, San Jose, CA 95116. Quarterly. All USA subs, \$4; foreign, \$5 Sample, \$1.
- LONG TIME COMING.** Canadian lesbian newspaper. Box 218, Sta. E, Montreal, P.Q., Canada. Monthly. X & G, \$5; L, \$10; F (women), free; outside USA & Canada, \$10 except L, \$15 Sample, 50c.
- MOM'S APPLE PIE.** Lesbian Mothers National Defense Fund newsletter. 2446 Lorentz Pl. N, Seattle, WA 98109. Bimonthly. All subs, \$2, free with \$5 membership in LMNDF. Sample, 25c.
- NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF GAY PSYCHOLOGISTS.** For professionals & students in psychology. Box 214103, Sacramento, CA 95821. 3-4 times yearly. All subs, \$5. Sample, free.
- NEWSLETTER OF GAY CAUCUS FOR THE MODERN LANGUAGES.** Gay caucus allied with Modern Language Assn. c/o R. Gustafson, 44 W. 10, NYC, NY 10011. Irregular. X, L & G, \$2; P, free; foreign, \$3. Sample, 25c.
- NEWSWEST.** Newspaper for gay people and their friends. 373 N. Western Ave., Suite 203, Los Angeles, CA 90004. Biweekly. All subs, 17 issues \$4.50, 26 issues \$6.75. Sample, 50c.
- NORTHWEST GAY REVIEW.** Newspaper for Pacific Northwest. 118 W. Burnside, Portland, OR 97209. Monthly. X & L, \$5; G, exchange; P, free. Sample, 50c.
- OHIO EAST GAY NEWS.** Gay paper for Cleveland-Akron. Box 10236, Pittsburgh, PA 15232. Monthly. X & L, \$5; G, \$5 or exchange; P, free; foreign, \$10. Sample, 50c.
- PACIFIC COAST TIMES.** Gay newsmagazine. Box 7173, San Diego, CA 92107. Biweekly. X & L, \$6, \$8 airmail; G & P, free; foreign, \$10. Sample, 50c.
- PA'FUERA!** Spanish language gay newspaper. Box 5523, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan, PR 00906. Monthly. X & L, \$5, \$6 airmail; G, same or exchange; P, free. Sample, free (one only).
- PITTSBURGH GAY NEWS.** Gay paper for western Penna., Ohio, W. Va. Box 10236, Pittsburgh, PA 15232. Monthly. X & L, \$5; G, \$5 or exchange; P, free; foreign, \$10. Sample, 50c.
- POINT BLANK TIMES.** Lesbian feminist publication. 1241 W. Bell, No. 4, Houston, TX 77019. Monthly. X, \$5; L, \$10; G, \$5 or exchange; P (women), free. Sample, 50c.
- PRESBYTERIAN GAY CAUCUS NEWSLETTER.** For active Presbyterians, gay or non-gay. Box 2073, Chicago, IL 60690. Irregular, 4-10 times yearly. X, free (contributions welcome); L, 10 issues \$10; G, \$5 but free to gay caucuses in other denominations; P, free. Sample, free.
- R.F.D.** Magazine by and for rural gay men. Box 161, Grinnell, IA 50112. Quarterly. X & G, \$3, \$5 1st class; L, \$6; P, free; Canada, \$3; other countries, \$5. Sample, 75c.
- SAN FRANCISCO SENTINEL.** Gay newspaper for Bay Area. 1035 Kearny, San Francisco, CA 94133. Biweekly. All subs, \$15. Sample, free.
- SAPPHO.** Only lesbian magazine in Europe. BCM/Petrel, London WC1V 6XX, England. Monthly. All USA subs: seaimail £4.75 unsealed, £6.40 sealed; airmail £7.25 unsealed, £9.70 sealed. Sample, .55p surface, .95p airmail. Payment in British sterling only. Microfilm ed. inquire Northwestern Univ. Women's History Library, Evanston, IL 60201.

(continued)

- SEXUALAWREPORTER. National newsletter on sex law reform. 3701 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Bimonthly. X & G, \$15; L, \$25; P, \$5; students, \$10. Sample, \$3. Microfilm ed. being negotiated.
- SIGNAL. Newsletter of Gay Nurses Alliance. Box 5687, Phila., PA 19129. Quarterly. X, L & G, \$2.50; P, free; foreign, \$3. Sample, free.
- SO'S YOUR OLD LADY. Lesbian feminist journal. Lesbian Resource Center, 2104 Stevens Ave. S, Minneapolis, MN 55404. Bimonthly. All subs, \$6. Sample, 75c in Minnesota, \$1 outside.
- UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST GAY WORLD. Newsletter of UUA Gay Caucus. c/o Kirk McHamilton, 1423 Whittier NW, Wash., DC 20012. Quarterly. All subs free.
- UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST GAY CAUCUS NEWSLETTER. Box 24005, Phila., PA 19139. Irregular. All subs free but donation requested. Sample, free.
- VECTOR. The male gay experience. 83 Sixth, San Francisco, CA 94103. Monthly. X, L & G, \$10, \$12 1st class; foreign, \$12. Sample, \$1.
- WICCE. Lesbian feminist publication. Box 15833, Phila., PA 19103. Irregular. X, \$3.50; L, \$7; G, \$3.50 or exchange; P (women), free. Sample, 65c.

AUDIO-VISUALS

We recommend that non-gay audiences who use these A-V materials do so with knowledgeable gay persons present to answer questions.

- COMING OUT, by Berkeley Lesbian-Feminist Film Collective, 1974. 166 mm film, b-w, sound, 11 mins. Women's Film Coop, 200 N. Main, Northampton, MA 01060, rental \$15.

For lesbian feminist audiences. Explores coming to grips with one's lesbian feelings. Effective sequence about socially induced guilt: "It's hard to fight when the enemy has outposts in your head." Generally choppy and awkward, but evocative.

- COUNSELING PARENTS OF GAYS, by Rev. Paul R. Shanley, 1975. Audio cassette, 45 mins. Ampco Inc., 101 Tremont, Boston, MA 02108, sale \$7.95; with STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT GAYS [see], \$15.95.

Father Shanley has been assigned by Cardinal Medeiros of Boston to a ministry to the gay and bisexual communities. Here directly addressing Catholic parents, he reviews information about homosexuality, cuts down myths, cautions against homophobic reactions, counsels why and how to accept and support the gay child. Though he claims to talk only about male gays, most of his words will be equally meaningful for parents of lesbians. Reassuring, persuasive, practical. Prime listening for parents and for clergy and counselors in all spheres.

- GAY LIBERATION: THE MINNESOTA WAY, by WCCO-TV and the University of Minnesota, 1974. Videotape, ¾" cassette, color, 26 mins. Univ. of Minnesota, Marketing, Audio Visual Library Services, 3300 University Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414, sale \$100, dubbing also available.

Originally a commercial TV show in the Twin Cities, with addition of introductory and closing commentary by a gay high school student. Scenes of the Jack Baker-Michael McConnell wedding. Scenes of everyday life of two young gay couples. Emphasis on affection though it often seems self-conscious. Moving sequence of young people's reactions when the gay churchworker they esteem is rejected for ordination. Show includes results of survey of major employers' policies on hiring gays; plus pro and con letters from viewers of original show.

- GAY PEOPLE/STRAIGHT HEALTH CARE, by Jeri Dilno for Gay Nurses Alliance, 1974. Slides & separate audio cassette, color, 15 mins. Being revised & converted to filmstrip, available October 1975. Gay Nurses Alliance, Box 5687, Phila., PA 19129, price to be determined.

Dramatizations of actual gay nurse and gay patient experiences. A gay man tries to visit his lover who's in intensive care after a heart attack; a gay nurse is afraid to protest staff jokes about gays; a gay youngster with v.d. sees a doctor with anti-gay views; a lesbian faced with a serious diagnosis needs the open support of her lover to cope; a gay man's arm dressings are neglected by homophobic hospital staff after a visit from his lover. Pioneer use of A-V by a gay professional organization to illustrate gay problems.

- A GAY VIEW/MALE, by Laird Sutton, 1974. 16mm film, color, sound, 17 mins. Multi Media Resource Center, 540 Powell, San Francisco, CA 94108, rental \$40, sale \$210.

Three gay men talk about personal identity struggles, coming out, and social conditioning. Visually static; general effect is low-key. Especially useful for men's consciousness raising.

- HOME MOVIE, by Jan Oxenberg, 1973. 16mm film, color & b-w, sound, 11 mins. Multi Media Resource Center, 540 Powell, San Francisco, CA 94108, rental \$35, sale \$200.

A lesbian tells of the unfolding of her love for other women. Scenes from her parents' home movies show her imitating mother's role and dancing for the camera as a child, and cheerleading in high school. Today she and lesbian friends happily play football and take part in a Gay Pride march.

- HOMOSEXUALITY: THURSDAY'S CHILD, by Naomi Katz, Alan Gelman, & Charles Harrison, produced by Audio Visual Narrative Arts, 1974. 2 color filmstrips with sound & guide, total 36 mins. Audio Visual Narrative Arts, Inc., Box 398, Pleasantville, NY 10570, sale \$37.50 with phonodiscs, \$41.50 with cassettes.

Thursday's child has far to go... in this case, toward social and legal equality. Interviews with a psychologist and a psychiatrist, with three gay men, including Dr. Howard Brown; with a lesbian couple who've dealt with role problems in their relationship; with writer Bertha Harris who returned to gay life after marriage. The classic charge that gays "flaunt" themselves is answered in a too-brief scene. Parts textbookish and slow. For audiences high school and older.

- THE INVISIBLE MINORITY: THE HOMOSEXUALS IN OUR SOCIETY, by deryck calderwood and Wasyl Szkodzinsky, 1972. 3 color filmstrips with phonodiscs, approx. 20 mins. each. Dept. of Education & Social Concern, Unitarian Universalist Assn., 25 Beacon, Boston, MA 02108, sale \$60.

Though dated in parts, this is a good general introduction to gay people, the gay movement, gay issues. Remarkable for the number and diversity of gay individuals portrayed. Poor treatment of transsexualism and transvestism. Excellent sequence of a college student's dialogue with her hostile father. Another episode touches on "the little oppressions," such as that non-gays fail to treat gay people's love relationships as significant. Parts 1 & 2 can, and usually should, be shown without part 3. Sound often hard to understand.

- LAVENDER, by Colleen Monahan and Elaine Jacobs, 1972. 16 mm film (also 8 mm & videocassette), color, sound, 13 mins. Perennial Education, Inc., 1825 Willow Rd., Box 236, Northfield, IL 60093, rental \$17, sale \$170.

A glimpse at the life of a young lesbian couple, one a seminary student. Too short to show their relationship in depth and complexity, but a wholesome and happy portrayal. Sound quality uneven.

- LESBIANS AND GAY MEN: A NEW VIEW, produced by CIDCOMED, a division of Council for Interdisciplinary Communication in Medicine Ltd., 1974. Audio cassette, 60 mins. Council for Interdisciplinary Communication in

Medicine, 230 Park Ave., Rm. 563, NYC, NY 10017, sale \$5, bookstore discount available.

Taped originally for distribution to doctors, re-edited for a wider audience. A psychiatrist and four gay activists, including physician Howard Brown, discuss what homosexuality is, the failings of research on it, positive aspects as well as problems of gay life, older gays, role-playing, married gays, gay parents, how psychiatrists can be of help to gay people, etc. Some controversial topics, e.g. bisexuality, inadequately probed. The gay panelists share personal histories. Positive, basic information item, especially useful for non-gays in the healing and helping professions.

ON BEING GAY. 1973. Audio cassette, 90 mins. Thesis Creative Educational Resources, Box 11724, Pittsburgh, PA 15228, sale \$6.98 prepaid, 35 cents extra if billed.

Primarily for church study groups. To be heard in six sessions. Printed Study Guide with tape has questions for discussion of each part. Interviews with adult and teenage gay people, female and male, and with a lawyer, a minister, a psychiatrist, and a seminary president.

A POSITION OF FAITH, by Michael Rhodes, 1973. 16 mm film, color, sound, 18 mins. Contemporary—McGraw-Hill Films, 1221 Ave. of Americas, NYC, NY 10020, rental \$25, sale \$290. Rental also at \$15 from Office for Audio-Visuals, United Church of Christ, 600 Grand Ave., Ridgefield, NJ 07657.

Should a person who is gay be ordained to the ministry? Intended to promote dialogue in local churches, this film explores the issues that arose before ordination of Rev. William Johnson within the United Church of Christ in June 1972. Does not attempt to deal with biblical questions. Slightly weighted toward anti-ordination opinion, but includes favorable comments by young people Johnson worked with in church.

SANDY AND MADELEINE'S FAMILY, by Sherrie Farrell, John Gordon Hill and Peter M. Bruce, 1973. 16 mm film, color, sound, 29 mins. Multi Media Resource Center, 540 Powell, San Francisco, CA 94108, rental \$50 (for gay groups, \$40), sale \$330.

A lesbian couple and their six children shown at home. The children's feelings are explored; children's voices often hard to make out. The women are deeply religious and maintain close ties with the church. Interviews with a social worker and doctor involved in their divorce and custody cases, and with a judge in the court. Interview with Margaret Mead commenting on the nuclear family. Some confusing transitions.

SECOND LARGEST MINORITY and GAY AND PROUD, by Lilli Vincenz, 1968 & 1970. 16 mm films, b-w, sound, 8 mins. & 11 mins. Lilli Vincenz, 5 S. 8th Pl., Arlington, VA 22204, rental by arrangement.

First film shows next-to-last of the formal picketings by gays at Independence Hall each July 4th, 1965-69. While small in numbers and conservative by today's standards, these demonstrations shocked many people in the 60's. Second film shows first Christopher Street Liberation Day parade in NYC, commemorating the first time (1969) gay people fought back in a police raid on a gay bar. The huge parade and following Gay-In in Central Park reflect the new exuberance of gay pride. Sound uneven but transcript comes with films.

SOME OF YOUR BEST FRIENDS, by Kenneth Robinson et al., 1972. 16 mm film, color, sound, 40 mins. University of Southern California, Film Distribution Section, Division of Cinema, University Park, Los Angeles, CA 90007, rental 1-3 days, \$12, 4-6 days \$24, plus postage-insurance approx. \$2.50; sale \$325.

Scenes of gay groups' meetings and of parades and demonstrations by gays, including a "zap" of a psychiatric meeting on behavior therapy. Reenactment of a police entrapment episode. Interviews with a lesbian and a gay man. California-oriented. Sound in group scenes hard to follow.

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT GAYS, by Rev. Paul R. Shanley, 1974. Audio cassette, 60 mins. Ampro Inc., 101 Tremont, Boston, MA 02108, sale \$8.95; with COUNSELING PARENTS OF GAYS [see], \$15.95.

In a conversational manner, Father Shanley talks about changing concepts of sin, civil rights for gays, bisexuality, homophobia, gay clergy, transvestism and transsexualism as distinguished from gayness, etc. Minor inconsistencies on statistics. Overlong examination of alleged causes of homosexuality. Late acknowledgement that he doesn't claim to speak about lesbians. Limited perspective on gay male social scene. Does not delve into Catholic Church's position on morality of same-sex acts but maintains that the real moral question "is not what homosexuals do but what we do to them." Good for non-gay Catholic/Christian audiences including clergy.

Note: For sex-education courses where materials that include portrayals of same-sex love-making are needed, request literature from: (a) Dept. of Education & Social Concern, Unitarian Universalist Assn., 25 Beacon, Boston, MA 02108 -- "Revised Edition: About Your Sexuality" (multimedia curriculum, junior high and up); (b) Multi Media Resource Center, 540 Powell, San Francisco, CA 94108 -- 16 mm films.

SPECIAL COLLECTION, 1811-1975

Katz, Jonathan, ed. HOMOSEXUALITY: LESBIANS AND GAY MEN IN SOCIETY, HISTORY AND LITERATURE. Arno Press, 1975.

The 54 books and 2 periodicals in this series may be purchased individually or as a collection. For a fully annotated brochure with prices and ordering information, write to: Arno Press, 330 Madison, NYC, NY 10017.

Acosta, Mercedes de. HERE LIES THE HEART. 1960.

Bannon, Ann. I AM A WOMAN. 1959.

Bannon, Ann. JOURNEY TO A WOMAN. 1960.

Bannon, Ann. ODD GIRL OUT. 1957.

Bannon, Ann. WOMEN IN THE SHADOWS. 1959.

Barney, Natalie Clifford. AVENTURES DE L'ESPRIT. 1929.

Barney, Natalie Clifford. TRAITS ET PORTRAITS. 1963.

Brooks, Romaine. PORTRAITS, TABLEAUX, DESSINS. 1952.

Carpenter, Edward. INTERMEDIATE TYPES AMONG PRIMITIVE FOLK. 1919.

Casal, Mary. THE STONE WALL. 1930.

Cory, Donald Webster. THE HOMOSEXUAL IN AMERICA. 1951.

Craig, Elisabeth. EITHER IS LOVE. 1937.

Daughters of Bilitis. THE LADDER. Vols. 1-16. Including an INDEX TO THE LADDER by Gene Damon. 1956-1972. Nine vols.

DOCUMENTS OF THE HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN GERMANY, 1836-1927. 1975.

Ellis, Havelock and Symonds, John Addington. SEXUAL INVERSION. 1897.

Fitzroy, A.T. DESPISED AND REJECTED. 1917.

Ford, Charles and Tyler, Parker. THE YOUNG AND EVIL. 1933.

Fredericks, Diana. DIANA: A STRANGE AUTOBIOGRAPHY. 1939.

Friedlaender, Benedict. RENAISSANCE DES EROS URANIOS. 1904.

A GAY BIBLIOGRAPHY: Eight Bibliographies on Lesbianism and Male Homosexuality [reprints]. 1975.

A GAY NEWS CHRONOLOGY, 1969-1975: Index and Abstracts of Articles from The New York Times. 1975.

(continued)

- Jordan, Mary. CHASE OF THE WILD GOOSE. 1936.
GOVERNMENT VERSUS HOMOSEXUALS, an original Arno Press anthology. 1975.
- Grosskurth, Phyllis. JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS. 1964.
- Gunn, Peter. VERNON LEE: VIOLET PAGET. 1856-1935. 1964.
- A HOMOSEXUAL EMANCIPATION MISCELLANY, c. 1835-1952, an original Arno Press anthology. 1975.
- Karsch-Haack, [Erdinand]. DAS GLEICHGESCHLECHT-LICHE LEBEN DER NATURVÖLKER. 1911.
- Katz, Jonathan. COMING OUT! 1975.
- LESBIANISM AND FEMINISM IN GERMANY, 1895-1910, an original Arno Press anthology. 1975.
- Lind, Earl. AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ANDROGYNE. 1918.
- Lind, Earl. THE FEMALE IMPERSONATORS. 1922.
- Loeffler, Donald L. AN ANALYSIS OF THE TREATMENT OF THE HOMOSEXUAL CHARACTER IN DRAMAS PRODUCED IN THE NEW YORK THEATRE FROM 1950 TO 1968. 1975.
- Mallet, Françoise. THE ILLUSIONIST. 1952.
- MISS MARIANNE WOODS AND MISS JANE PIRIE AGAINST DAME HELEN CUMMING GORDON. 1811-1819.
- Mattachine Society. MATTACHINE REVIEW. Vols. 1-13. 1955-1966. Six vols.
- Mayne, Xavier. IMRE: A MEMORANDUM. 1908.
- Mayne, Xavier. THE INTERSEXES. 1908.
- Morgan, Claire. THE PRICE OF SALT. 1952.
- Niles, Blair. STRANGE BROTHER. 1931.
- Olivia. OLIVIA. 1949.
- Rule, Jane. THE DESERT OF THE HEART. 1964.
- Sagarin, Edward. STRUCTURE AND IDEOLOGY IN AN ASSOCIATION OF DEVIANTS. 1975.
- Steakley, James D. THE HOMOSEXUAL EMANCIPATION MOVEMENT IN GERMANY. 1975.
- Sturgeon, Mary C. MICHAEL FIELD. 1921.
- Sutherland, Alistair and Anderson, Patrick. EROS: AN ANTHOLOGY OF FRIENDSHIP. 1961.
- Sweet, Roxanna Thayer. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTION IN HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATIONS. 1975.
- Tobin, Kay and Wicker, Randy. THE GAY CRUSADERS. 1972.
- Ulrichs, Carl Heinrich. FORSCHUNGEN ÜBER DAS RATSSEL DER MANNMÄNNLICHEN LIEBE. 1898.
- Underwood, Reginald. BACHELOR'S HALL. 1937.
- [Vincenzo], Una, Lady Troubridge. THE LIFE OF RADCLIFFE HALL. 1963.
- Vivien, Renee. POEMES DE RENEE VIVIEN. Two vols. in one. 1923-24.
- Weirauch, Anna Elisabet. THE OUTCAST. 1933.
- Weirauch, Anna Elisabet. THE SCORPION. 1932.
- Wilhelm, Gale. TORCHLIGHT TO VALHALLA. 1938.
- Wilhelm, Gale. WE TOO ARE DRIFTING. 1935.
- Winsloe, Christa. THE CHILD MANUELA. 1933.

ABOUT OUR GROUP

The American Library Association Task Force on Gay Liberation (Social Responsibilities Round Table), launched in 1970, was the first openly gay subgroup in a professional association. Many other such groups now exist, including the Gay Caucus of the American Psychiatric Association, the Gay Nurses Alliance, the Association of Gay Psychologists, the Gay Caucus for the Modern Languages, the Gay Caucus of the American Public Health Association.

We work to promote the creation, publication and dissemination of more and better materials on gay people and the gay movement, and to raise within the library profession issues of discrimination against gay people both as librarians and as library users.

We present the GAY BOOK AWARD at annual meetings of the ALA. Past awards:

- 1971 PATIENCE AND SARAH by Isabel Miller (McGraw-Hill, 1972, also Fawcett paper ed.) The award was given this historical novel under its original title A PLACE FOR US, privately printed, 1970.
- 1972 Joint award: THE GAY MYSTIQUE by Peter Fisher
LESBIAN/WOMAN by Del Martin & Phyllis Lyon
- 1973 No award
- 1974 SEX VARIANT WOMEN IN LITERATURE by Jeannette Foster. This critical survey, published by Vantage in 1956, had long been out of print when it was given the award. The book is being republished in late 1975 by Diana Press.
- 1975 HOMOSEXUALITY: LESBIANS AND GAY MEN IN SOCIETY, HISTORY AND LITERATURE edited by Jonathan Katz. (See list elsewhere of titles in this collection.)

In summer 1975, we issued our first Gay Guidelines - "Guidelines for Treatment of Gay Themes in Children's and Young Adult Literature," intended primarily for authors and publishers of books for younger readers.

For a detailed account of our work over the years, see the chapter "Combating the Lies in the Libraries" in THE GAY ACADEMIC, edited by Louie Crew, due out in May 1976 from FTC Publications.

ABOUT OUR BIBLIOGRAPHY

In the past, we distributed copies of earlier (and shorter) editions of the bibliography free (single copies) or for a nominal payment (quantities). However, expenses for this greatly expanded edition make it necessary for us to ask for donations as follows, to cover printing and postage costs:

Single copy, 25¢	5 copies, \$1	6-30 copies, 15¢ each	31+ copies, 12¢ each
------------------	---------------	-----------------------	----------------------

Requests from outside USA, Canada & Mexico for a single copy should enclose International Postal Reply Coupons sufficient for 75¢ for Airmail; overseas quantity rates on request.

Checks and money orders should be made payable to "Barbara Gittings - TFGI" and sent to: Barbara Gittings, Coordinator, Box 2383, Philadelphia, PA 19103. All financial assistance for our work is gratefully received!

Coordinator: Barbara Gittings, Task Force on Gay Liberation, American Library Association (Social Responsibilities Round Table), Box 2383, Philadelphia, PA 19103

NATIONAL GAY RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND CONTACT PERSONS

American Baptist Gay Caucus

- Louise Rose, 712 So. 49th St., Philadelphia, PA 19143
- Rev. Roger Harrison, 964 Noria St., Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Brethren/Mennonite

- c/o Box 52, Lancaster, PA 17604

Disciples of Christ

- Rev. Richard McAfee, 2200-A Portis Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110

Episcopal Church (Integrity)

- Rev. Ronald Wesner, Pres., 5014 Willows Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143
- Dr. Louie Crew, 701 Orange St., #6, Ft. Valley, GA 31030

Evangelicals Concerned

- Dr. Ralph Blair, 30 E. 60th St., New York, NY 10022

Friends Committee for Gay Concerns

- c/o P. O. Box 222, Sumneytown, PA 18084

Jewish contacts

- Gay Hebrew Alliance, P. O. Box 330132, Miami, FL 33133
- Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, P. O. Box 1270, New York, NY 10001
- Congregation Beth Chayim Chadashim, 1945 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90025

Lutherans Concerned for Gay People

- Howard Erickson, Diane Fraser, Box 19114A, Los Angeles, CA 90019

Presbyterian Gay Caucus

- Rev. David Sindt, P. O. Box 2073, Chicago, IL 60690

Roman Catholic

- Paul Diederich, Dignity, Rm. 514, 755 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02116
- Br. Grant-Michael Fitzgerald, Salvatorian Brothers, 1735 Hi-Mount Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53208

Seventh-Day Adventists

- Jim Stuart, P. O. Box 6732, San Francisco, CA 94101

Unitarian Universalist Association

- Susan Cogger, David Fanning, Unitarian Gay Caucus, 1187 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109
- Arlie Scott, Office of Gay Concerns, UUA, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

United Church of Christ Gay Caucus

- Nancy Krody, P. O. Box 24005, Philadelphia, PA 19139

United Methodist Gay Caucus

- Keith Spare, 3720 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO 64111

Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

- UFMCC, 1050 So. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90015
- Rev. Roy Birchard, Suite 210, 110 Maryland Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20002

The Gay Issues and Ministry Task Force of the Commission on Women in Ministry greatly appreciates the contribution of the Unitarian-Universalist Office of Gay Concerns in the production of the original copies of the packet which were used in the consciousness raising pilot project with the members of the Commission on Women in Ministry.

The national gay civil rights bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on February 2, 1977, by Edward I. Koch (D, NY), and is designated HR 2998. By early March, 1977, it had thirty-seven additional sponsors. Urge your Representative to add her or his name to the list of sponsors, and write to Don Edwards (D, Cal.) to urge that his Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights (part of the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives) hold hearings on the bill this year.

Additional information about this and other legislative matters can be obtained from:

Gay Rights National Lobby, Suite 210, 110 Maryland Ave., NW,
Washington, DC 20002
(Adam DeBaugh, staff)

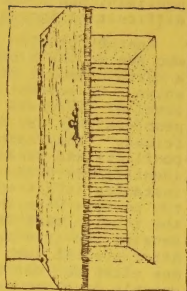
National Gay Task Force, Rm. 506, 80 Fifth Ave., New York, 10011
(Rev. Robert Herrick, religious coordinator)

The first level: "I'm in the closet, but even I don't know it."



Come In And Out The Closet

The third level: "Only my best friends know I'm out of the closet."



I SAT ON THE BED in my room having just finished reading *A Man Called Peter*. I was sixteen and the book spoke clearly to the central question I was asking those days, "What do I want to do with my life?" My Presbyterian family and the church we regularly attended had taught me a formula for figuring out God's will for my life. In those restless days I had been trying to apply that formula, fully believing that God would speak through the process as I identified areas in which he had given me skills and interests, and areas of life in which there was human need.

I began to pray as I so often did in those days, and as I did the various settings and relationships of my life flashed before me. The greatest moments of joy were those in which I worked and studied with some of the other kids and adults in my congregation. Dating my steady boyfriend, going to ball-games and singing with friends in the chorus were fun, but the most meaningful times were those when I worked with inner-city children in the summer recreation program or taught second-graders on Sunday morning or led Bible study and worship at day camp. That night it all came together, and I knew that God was "calling me to full-time church work." I gave thanks as the restlessness gave way to a deep calm that was counterbalanced by the energy and excitement of my clear commitment. It all seemed to simple then.

Twenty years, three degrees, eight jobs, and three lovers later, I am still doing "full-time church work." By most standards, I am quite successful in my profession, and I find it extremely exciting and satisfying. However, during the past two years the restlessness has returned and I am again looking for answers to the central question, "What should I do with my life?" The question is prompted anew by my growing awareness of myself as a lesbian and by the increased awareness of the oppression of our society toward persons who love persons of their own sex.

The search for clarity about my sexuality was a struggle, and I found very little help from the church as I pursued that search. However, I was able to move to a very positive understanding of myself as a Christian, a woman, and a lesbian. I am pleased with the quality of the relationships I have with other people, the friendships with men and women and the intimate relationships with

women. I am still learning and growing in these relationships, and I am quite comfortable about that. The restlessness comes from my discomfort at having to hide the direction of my sexual preference. The problems are many, and many of the problems are subtle.

The image of being "in the closet" which gay people use to describe the hiding of our homosexuality, is one I find helpful. The opposite of being in the closet is "coming out." I see several levels of coming out that are important for gay Christians who value being in (working in) the institutional church. Each level has its own assets and liabilities.

The first level is "I'm in the closet, but even I don't know it." I have met quite a few of these people in the church. I was there myself for a short time. People at this level do not consider sexual relationships with persons of their own sex to be an option for them. Their religious faith and their society reinforce this assumption. They therefore choose one of two options.

Some relate to and often marry persons of the opposite sex and play the socially, religiously prescribed roles of heterosexuals. They ignore the problems presented by their pretend-life, or they are overwhelmed by them and use some form of escapism, such as overwork or alcoholism. The church has many helpful little quotes to help them carry off their games: "my cross to bear," "no marriage is perfect," "more blessed to give," "the spiritual life is what really counts," etc.

Other people at this level reject both heterosexual and homosexual relationships and affirm celibacy. In no way do I imply that all or most celibate people are closeted homosexuals. They are not! But those persons who do prefer their own sex but are not aware of it are often pretty comfortable with their choice of celibacy. It is a meaningful choice for a life of giving to others. The self-denial is relatively painless as long as there are causes to give oneself to and as long as a homosexual relationship is not consciously considered an option. Frequently, however, it becomes increasingly difficult to ignore feelings that are aroused by a close friendship with a person of the same sex. As society becomes more tolerant of homosexuality and as more gay people come out

publicly, one's own homosexuality is more difficult to ignore.

Another problem that arises among persons who are in the closet but don't know it is a certain amount of confusion about relationships. On several occasions persons at this level of awareness have talked to me about problems they are having with their "best friend." They cannot understand certain conflicts and tensions that arise without any identifiable cause. In several of these instances it has appeared to me that the two persons were in love with each other and the tension came from their ignoring or denying the true nature of their love. After several such puzzling experiences one often decides that she or he is just not capable of close relationships. The fact is such persons are not capable of playing "friends" when they are really lovers. Many people, however, appear to function happily and productively at this level.

The second level is "I'm in the closet with my lover, but nobody will ever know." At this level, the person knows that he or she is gay and is acting out that sexual preference in ways that are consistent with his/her own morality. There is life at home and life at the office--two totally different worlds. At home there are all the adjustments and responsibilities and joys of any healthy intimate relationship. Outside the home--at work, at parties, at church, with parents and siblings--the hetero game is played. To most people the couple is just sharing living space to cut down on expenses.

After several years some people may suspect there is more to the relationship than convenience, but friends choose to ignore it and others gossip about it far from the ear of the couple. If the lovers are male, it is prudent to get separate apartments for appearance sake. Women get by with a bit more since they are pitied old maids rather than glamorous bachelors. Helpful friends never give up seeking to play cupid, and real estate brokers and banks are reluctant to let the couple buy property jointly, since everyone knows one of them is likely to find "the right man (or woman)" and get married any day. Nevertheless, strong couples can survive the double life. One becomes very creative at playing the hetero game. At times it is even fun--at times.

But this constant denial usually takes its toll on the relationship. If everyone around you tells you that you ought to be something else, and you pretend most of the time, it is hard to remember that you are a person of worth just as you are. It even gets hard to remember that the secret love you share is indeed a beautiful creation of God.

Maintaining this double life becomes even more precarious if the consciousness of one of the partners changes, and she or he begins to feel responsible to come out, at least with family and close friends. It is of course impossible to come out and respect the privacy of your lover. This situation frequently leads to a moral dilemma for gay Christians who have a strong sense of social responsibility and a strong commitment to a lover.

Another frustration that is experienced at this level comes from the inability to snare with friends and family something as beautiful and important as a primary love relationship. People just like to share the good things of life with people they love. This level of openness denies that possibility.

There are some distinct advantages to choosing this level of openness, however. If the couple can function in the double life, and if their relationship can survive the pressures of constant role playing, they are spared direct attack and condemnation from family, friends, and business associates. More significantly, they have many more vocational options open to them, especially in the church.

The gay minister who is married to a person of the opposite sex for cover can move into almost any church profession. Single closeted males have more limited options, since local churches often insist on married men in the pulpit. Women, straight or gay, married or single, experience equal discrimination when they seek positions as senior ministers of congregations. However, except for the position of preaching minister, closeted lesbians and male homosexuals can secure almost any position in the church. Many gay people choose this level of openness because they feel their work is important to the church, and they are willing to tolerate the church's intolerance in order to do the work to which God has called them.

The third level of openness is "Only my best friends know I'm out of the closet." This level has the advantages of the greater vocational freedom and the freedom to share this important aspect of life with a supportive community of friends and family. Role playing isn't so bad when it is only done with people who don't matter that much anyway. This level seems like the best of both worlds, except that there is always that haunting possibility that a close friend will prove to be not so close, and the information can then be used against the gay person to endanger her/his job.

Another problem with this level of openness is that a little openness seems to whet the appetite for more. Once the person tastes the joys of being honest and free about his/her true self, it becomes increasingly difficult and ridiculous to fake it. It almost seems that you are insulting the people you refuse to tell.

Perhaps the most difficult problem with this level is the conflict in social responsibility. The gay Christian who works in a church profession to increase the love of people for God and neighbor has a hard time restraining him/herself from working actively for the liberation of gay people. Part of working for that liberation is coming out publicly. I firmly believe that if all gay Christians came out publicly at the same time the church would have to accept us. There are just too many good Christian people who are gay for the church to deny us. But in the meantime, any single gay Christian who comes out can be sure that she or he will be denied the right to work in a church profession. Again the moral dilemma.

I have chosen this level of openness because I believe my job in the church is important, but I know that if I came out publicly now I would be denied the opportunity to serve the church. At best I might be permitted to serve an all-gay congregation in an all-gay denomination. That seems to be a significant way to serve, but it does not seem to be the place I can make my best contribution. So I stay closeted to the public, and I wonder how much longer I can tolerate the intolerance.

The fourth level of openness is "I'm out of the closet and I want everyone to know." Such freedom! The person at this level is risking everything to follow her/his conscience. She/he is affirming the God-given direction of his/her sexuality. There are opportunities to work openly for the liberation of gay people as well as all other people.

But where will this open gay person get a job? Not in any of the mainline denominations unless he/she is lucky enough to be paid an

occasional pittance to do consciousness-raising among liberal straight Christians. I know of two such positions for professional gay people. But who wants to be a professional gay person? Or a professional woman, or a professional black? Why must our total identity be defined in terms of our sexuality if we are gay? At this point in my life I am not willing to pay that price, though I am extremely grateful to my courageous gay sisters and brothers who have paid the price to work for my liberation. The day may come when I have to join them out of conscience, and I will regret that, because the church will be denied the main skills I have, and I will be denied my God-given right to serve as I feel called to do.

To other gay Christians who are asking the question, "What should I do with my life?" I suggest that you consider each of these levels carefully, weighing the assets and liabilities of each. And remember, at this time in the church, we can come out, but once out, we can't go back in the closet again.

"The punishment inflicted on gay prisoners comes from two directions: from the administration, and--to a lesser extent--from those fellow-inmates who are not labelled as being gay."

Gay Prisoners

by Harvey Alter

The degree of humaneness exhibited in a prison system is directly proportional to the degree to which the society that supports that institution has become civilized; so said Dostoevsky in his novel, The House of the Dead. If he is correct, then our nation's prison system constitutes a searing indictment of our assumption that our society is basically humane and just. And it allows us to sense the very real brutality and injustice that is hidden from the casual observer of American society by a thin veneer of mythology about American traditions of fair play and compassion for those who are down and out.

My personal, first-hand experiences with the American prison system seem to support Dostoevsky's contention, for it indeed appears that the social dynamics which characterize our society are present in an intensified state in prison populations and in the administrative policies and attitudes of those institutions. The complexities that surround those basic social dynamics--usually camouflaging them--are stripped away by the existential realities of a system of human incarceration, thus revealing the true nature of the dynamics, along with their frequent accompanying horrors.

This phenomenon is strikingly exemplified by the homophobic nature of the prison system, a nature embracing inmates and prison administration alike. Our society tends to equate social deviance with criminality, especially sexual deviance. The popular reaction to the problem of social deviance is that the person so labelled is one who cannot or will not subscribe to some of the norms and mores of

(The author, Harvey N. Alter, is one of three co-directors of the Task Force on Higher Education and Criminal Justice of the National Council of Churches. Previously the Director of Education Releaste in Western Massachusetts for the Department of Corrections, he has also worked in the New Jersey Corrections System as a researcher evaluating educational programs. His experience includes a bachelor's degree in education, a master's degree in sociology and three-and-one-half years as an inmate at Norfolk State Prison in Massachusetts.)

society and therefore has to be isolated, punished, and more recently, "cured" of whatever constitutes deviance.

For the gay prisoner, his or her "sin" is just being different in terms of sexual orientation. Therefore, when an inmate is identified or labelled as being gay, he or she suffers double jeopardy--for the crime that resulted in incarceration, and for the "crime" of being gay.

The punishment inflicted on gay prisoners comes from two directions: from the administration, and--to a lesser extent--from those

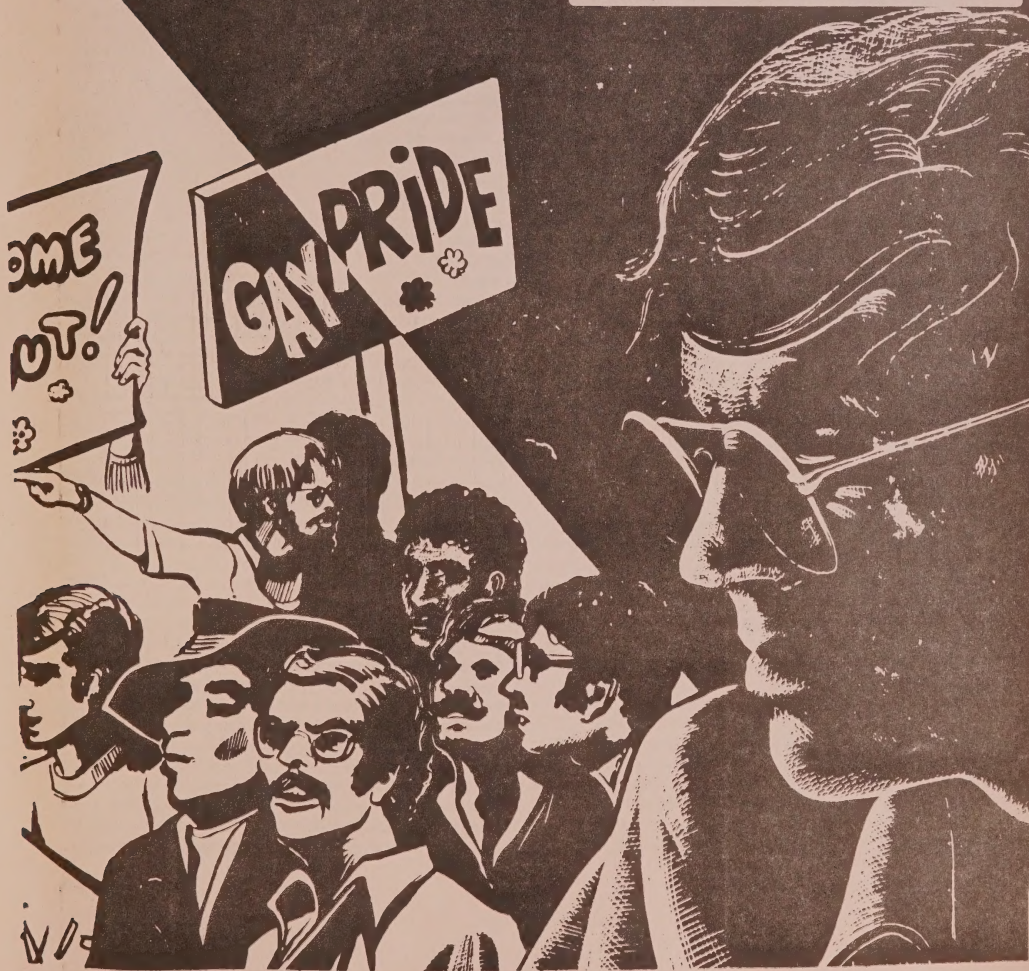


Reprinted from INTELLECT (November 1972, pp. 104-107)
1860 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10013

THE MYTHS OF HOMOSEXUALITY

By Sister JEANNINE GRAMICK, SSND*
Instructor of Mathematics,
College of Notre Dame of Maryland, Baltimore

Reprinted with permission of Dignity,
from its "Theological-Pastoral Re-
sources" packet (\$1.50 from Dignity,
Rm. 514, 755 Boylston St., Boston, MA
02116).



Educators must demythologize homosexuality by disseminating the results of scientific research

A LONG WITH THE CRIES OF LIBERATION from women, blacks, Chicanos, Indians, and other oppressed groups come public declarations of independence from America's homosexual communities. The significant departure from the bondage of "straight" oppression can be traced back to June, 1969, when the gay patrons of the Stonewall Inn, a bar in Greenwich Village, became "militant." For the first time in their corporate history, American homosexuals took a public stand in defense of their human rights, and actively resisted harassment by the New York City Police Department. The violent resistance of the Stonewall was much more than the spontaneous outburst of a small group of angry people tired of being treated as third-class citizens. The action symbolized a much more universal feeling slowly, but steadily, growing in America's gay community. American homosexuals were no longer content in being forced to lead a dual life of straight by day and gay by night. The leaders of America's newest vocal minority—conservatively estimated at about 6,000,000 people—were chanting "Two, four, six, eight; gay is just as good as straight." No longer must gay people feel they should hide in the "closet," the leaders said. Society should accept openly the homosexual life-style. Merle Miller recently told what it is like to be a homosexual,¹ while a Los Angeles student, just out of his "closet," commented, "Now that everyone knows, I really feel at ease with myself for the first time in my life."² "Coming out" is bound to have a profound impact on a homosexual's life. No longer should the gay person live with the fear of discovery resulting in possible rejection by friends or the threat of the loss of a job. Society's attitudes are slowly, ever so slowly, changing.

To change social attitudes radically is a common goal of the multitudinous gay organizations which have been mushrooming steadily since 1950. While the number of homophile organizations soared to 40 in 1968, there are now related chapters or new independent gay groups on most campuses of the nation's leading universities.³ A major thrust of homophile groups is attitudinal change; but attitudes can change only when people accept exposure to new ideas, accurate facts, and a willingness to investigate all sides of a question. Education, as a conveyor of truth, plays a large role in the reshaping of people's attitudes. Solid education about homosexuality and homosexuals must replace the stereotypes with the truth, the myths with the realities. What are the myths that hamper and limit persons who are homosexuals?

* The author has been involved with the reconciliation of the Church and the homosexual since the spring of 1971.

A common and long held myth in American society labels the male homosexual as an effeminate, limp-wristed individual. A revealing episode of the popular television show, "All in the Family," portrayed Archie Bunker meeting a noticeably effeminate friend of his son-in-law. Seeking more masculine companionship, Archie visits the local tavern and complains of this "queer" to a regular patron, who is decidedly masculine in appearance. The former football player, after patiently listening to Archie's tale, reveals that he himself is also homosexual. The stunned and incredulous look of Archie Bunker mirrors the surprise of most of the American public. The Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University,⁴ however, estimated that only 15% of male homosexuals are easily recognizable, and only five per cent of lesbians are identifiable as "butch" or masculine in appearance. The homosexual doctor in the British film, "Sunday, Bloody Sunday," and the divorced man and his lover in the recent television production, "That Certain Summer," were certainly not the lisping, mincing brand of homosexual that American society has grown accustomed to expect. There are, undoubtedly, effeminate male homosexuals and masculine-type lesbians, but these constitute only a small minority of the gay population. Unfortunately, these individuals, as well as transvestites, who frequently need professional psychiatric help, are the ones most likely to come into the public view, and consequently play a large part in forming public opinion about homosexuals. A prominent psychologist who chaired the Task Force on Homosexuality for the National Association for Mental Health has concluded that "there is no essential relation between effeminacy of body build, manner, or speech, and homosexuality."⁵

On Nov. 20, 1970, the National Association for Mental Health included the following observations in its statement on homosexuality: "Throughout history, in all cultures, a certain number of persons have been drawn to deviant sexual behavior. Such behavior does not constitute a specific mental or emotional illness." Yet, the professional world of psychiatry and psychology is not unanimous in categorizing homosexuality as non-pathological. On the contrary, psychiatry has been the traditional archenemy of the happy homosexual. Most psychiatrists view homosexuality as a neurotic disorder. The statements of one psychiatrist, that "Homosexuality is . . . a neurotic distortion of the total personality. . . . There are no healthy homosexuals,"⁶ are representative of the "traditional approach taken by most psychiatrists even today. All psychoanalytic theories assume, not conclude, that adult homosexuality is psychopathologic."⁷ Some psy-

chiatrists, however, are beginning to doubt the validity of this assumption. Hoffman conducted a non-clinical study of homosexuality, and found that there were a significant number of homosexuals who, by reasonable clinical criteria, could not be considered mentally ill.⁸ Pomeroy, a prominent New York psychologist and staff member of the Institute for Sex Research for 20 years, has written: "If my concept of homosexuality were developed from my practice, I would probably concur in thinking of it as an illness. I have seen no homosexual man or woman in that practice who was not troubled, emotionally upset, or neurotic. On the other hand, if my concept of marriage in the U.S. were based on my practice, I would have to conclude that marriages are all fraught with strife and conflict, and that heterosexuality is an illness. In my 20 years of research in the field of sex, I have seen many homosexuals who were happy, who were practicing and conscientious members of their community, and who were stable, productive, warm, relaxed, and efficient. Except for the fact that they were homosexual, they could be considered normal by any definition."⁹ To resist the pressures of a society in which the church calls one a sinner, the state brands one a criminal, and the medical profession labels one as sick, a homosexual must be a very strong personality indeed. A heterosexual person of average stamina would collapse emotionally in the face of such hostilities. Rather than point to homosexuals who are psychologically maladjusted as confirmation of the thesis that homosexuality is a disease, one should look with wonder upon those homosexuals who are psychologically sound, the obstacles of society notwithstanding.

In a classic study, Hooker found 30 homosexuals who, she felt, were reasonably well-adjusted and were not in treatment, and 30 heterosexuals who were matched for age, education, and I.Q. She gave all 60 males a battery of psychological tests, including the Rorschach and the Thematic Apperception Test. She submitted the results for analysis to three of her colleagues who did not know which of the tests had been given to the homosexuals and which to the heterosexuals. The clinicians who interpreted the tests were unable to distinguish any significant difference between the two groups tested. The general conclusion was that there is no inherent connection between homosexual orientation and clinical symptoms of mental illness.¹⁰

Thompson conducted a study on personal adjustment of male and female homosexuals. Groups of white, well-educated homosexuals were matched for age, sex, and education with heterosexual controls. The results indicated that the homosexual group did not differ in any way from heterosexuals in defensiveness, personal adjustment, self-confidence, or self-evaluation.¹¹ Similar results were reported by Chang and Block.¹² Much more research is certainly necessary, but the question of homosexuality probably will remain moot in the medical profession for many decades.

There are many other myths about homosexuality that need to be eradicated by sound education. The general American public views all homosexuals as perverted pederasts who seduce unsuspecting young boys. Each

year, a small number of male homosexuals, less than one per cent of the total homosexual population, are arrested for attacking youths. Each year, an even greater number of heterosexual males are arrested for attacking young girls. Yet, the public does not conclude that heterosexuality is a perversion, but rather rightly concludes that some heterosexuals are perverts. Most homosexuals hold views similar to their heterosexual counterparts regarding child molesting. The only logical conclusion can be that some homosexuals are perverts.

In 1965, the Institute for Sex Research published a massive volume on sex offenders, which showed that those who were arrested for sex offenses with boys under 16 are generally bisexual.¹³ Such male perverts are preoccupied with satisfying sexual urges with young boys or young girls. It is not fair to label all such youth-molesters as homosexual. It is a grosser error to judge all homosexuals as child seducers.

A third myth claims that all homosexuals are promiscuous. It is probably fair to assert that many, if not most, male homosexuals in the visible gay subculture are promiscuous. Can it then be logically concluded that homosexuality, *per se*, is an undesirable or warped form of sexuality? In present-day American culture, heterosexual relationships are undergoing deep stress regarding permanence. However, it is not logical to conclude from this phenomenon that heterosexuality, *per se*, is undesirable or warped. People, of whatever sexual orientation, generally are experiencing difficulty in maintaining their love relationships. The homosexual, unlike his or her heterosexual counterpart, lacks most of the social and cultural factors which tend to provide a supportive atmosphere of a stable relationship. A gay executive, for example, can not bring a gay lover to a formal company dinner dance at the local country club, nor can a gay professor invite a lover to the school's Christmas party. Heterosexual marriages are sanctioned by churches, and even rewarded by the state. A homosexual couple receives no tax benefits or reduced family rates for excursions and sundry entertainment. The strong social components which reinforce heterosexual marriages are simply not available to the homosexual couple.

Despite the great social pressures they must endure, many homosexuals have been able to maintain a stable, permanent relationship. Housing and job discrimination is not infrequent. Many social and church facilities are barred from use by homosexuals because "respectable" people do not desire to associate with them. (Such reactions are reminiscent of the white middle-class citizen who passionately denied feelings of prejudice while keeping the black man far removed from his neighborhood and his church.)

Many "broad-minded" heterosexuals complain, "I don't mind fags as long as they keep quiet about it. They don't have to tell anyone." The experience of Jack Baker, a 29-year-old law student and president of the graduate student body at the University of Minnesota, who caused a stir by applying for a marriage license to J. Michael McConnell in May, 1970,¹⁴ is not unique. Learning of Baker's homosexuality, his brother retorted, "Don't come around this house any more."¹⁵ Still, Baker maintains,

"All this hypocrisy and double life is a lot of nonsense and there just comes a time when you've had enough of it."¹⁶

The criminal status of homosexuality in most states of the U. S. likewise does not foster stable homosexual relationships. Using laws to persecute homosexuals goes back to the fourth century, when Christianity became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. Most of the major Western countries, however, have discarded archaic laws prohibiting homosexual acts between consenting adults, excepting most states of the U.S. In 1961, Illinois adopted the recommendation of the American Law Institute, and exempted homosexuals from its Model Penal Code. Connecticut, Oregon, Colorado, Alaska, and Idaho have followed suit in eliminating laws prohibiting private homosexual behavior between consenting adults. While the existing laws against sodomy and oral intercourse apply equally to heterosexual and homosexual acts, the laws have been enforced almost exclusively against homosexual behavior. Penalties range from one year to possible life imprisonment. Federal policy denies security clearances to homosexuals, and one-fifth of all jobs in private industry require security clearances. Legal reform is a major goal of the gay organizations. Gay crusaders maintain that the major policy reason for abolishing existing laws against homosexual behavior is simply that private acts by consenting adults are matters of private morality, and are not properly the concern of the state.

Not all societies view homosexuality as a taboo. A study of 193 world cultures reported by Hock and Zubin¹⁷ showed that male homosexuality was accepted by 28% of the cultures and rejected by 14%, while 58% showed partial acceptance or equivocation. Pomeroy¹⁸ reports that 53% of 225 American Indian cultures accepted male homosexuality, while only 24% of the cultures rejected it. Although the cowboys of the Wild West in the 19th century scorned effeminate men, they did not loathe homosexual behavior. Overt homosexuality was probably more common among this group than among any other group of males in the U.S.¹⁹

Still, 20th-century American society is less than tolerant of homosexuality. An anthropologist recounts: "Among the generality of Americans, homosexuality is regarded not with distaste, disgust, or abhorrence, but with panic; it is seen as an immediate and personal threat. . . . The lives of most American men are bounded, and their interests drastically curtailed, by this constant necessity to prove to their fellows, and to themselves, that they are not . . . homosexuals. It is difficult to exaggerate the prevalence of this unconscious fear."²⁰ After years of research in the field of sex, Kinsey concluded that human beings can not be classified simply as heterosexual or homosexual. Kinsey devised a seven-point scale, ranging from "exclusively heterosexual" to "exclusively homosexual." An individual may be located at different points on the scale at different periods of his or her life. Kinsey explained that human beings "do not represent two discrete populations, heterosexual and homosexual. The world is not to be divided into sheep and goats. . . . It is a fundamental of taxonomy that nature rarely deals with

discrete categories. Only the human mind invents categories and tries to force facts into separate pigeon-holes. The living world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects. The sooner we learn this concerning human sexual behavior, the sooner we shall reach a sound understanding of the realities of sex."²¹

Education must replace homosexual myths with homosexual realities: most homosexuals do not fit the stereotyped images; very few homosexuals are child-molesters; not all homosexuals are promiscuous. A gay person is more similar to a heterosexual of common educational and socioeconomic background than to another gay person of different educational and socioeconomic background. The only thing all homosexuals have in common is sexual, erotic orientation. Attitudinal change can occur only through exposure, contact, education, and confrontation with truth in the existential situation. Barbara Gittings, a leading gay activist for over 14 years, has observed very aptly: "The only way to break down misunderstanding and prejudice is by meeting and working with and learning to understand people."²² But then, most people probably have met and worked with homosexuals without realizing it.

NOTES

¹ Merle Miller, "What It Means to Be a Homosexual," *New York Times Magazine*, Jan. 17, 1971, pp. 9-11.

² Lynn Young, "Militant Homosexual; Gay Liberation Movement," *Newsweek*, 78:45-48, Aug. 23, 1971.

³ Foster Gunnison, Jr., "The Homophile Movement in America," in Ralph W. Weltge, ed., *The Same Sex* (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1969), pp. 113-128.

⁴ M. Kimball Jones, *Toward a Christian Understanding of the Homosexual* (New York: Association Press, 1966), p. 28.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

⁶ Edmund Bergler, *Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life?* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1957), p. 9.

⁷ Irving Bieber, *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytical Study* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), p. 18.

⁸ Martin Hoffman, *The Gay World* (New York: Bantam Books, 1969), p. 13.

⁹ Wardell B. Pomeroy, "Homosexuality," in Weltge, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

¹⁰ Evelyn Hooker, "The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual," *Journal of Projective Techniques*, 21: 18-31, February, 1957.

¹¹ Norman L. Thompson, Jr., Boyd R. McCandless, and Bonnie R. Strickland, "Personal Adjustment of Male and Female Homosexuals and Heterosexuals," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 78:237-240, October, 1971.

¹² Judy Chang and Jack Block, "A Study of Identification in Male Homosexuals," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 24: 307-310, August, 1960.

¹³ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹⁴ Nick Coleman, "Two Homosexuals Plan to Wed," *Minneapolis Daily*, May 19, 1970.

¹⁵ Young, *op. cit.*

¹⁶ Kay Tobin and Randy Wicker, *The Gay Crusaders* (New York: Paperback Library, 1972), p. 140.

¹⁷ Paul Hoch and Joseph Zubin, *Psychosexual Development in Health and Disease* (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1949).

¹⁸ Pomeroy, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²⁰ Geoffrey Gorer, *The American People*, revised edition (New York: Norton, 1964), pp. 128-129.

²¹ Alfred Kinsey, *et al.*, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia: Saunders, 1948), p. 639.

²² Barbara Gittings, "The Homosexual and the Church," in Weltge, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

Resource Packet on Gay Issues and Ministry

Background Information

The Commission on Women in Ministry (COWIM) is a program commission of Professional Church Leadership in the National Council of Churches' Division of Education and Ministry. COWIM's purpose is:

The Commission serves as an ecumenical advocate, support and empowerment group for lay and ordained women who are in professional church leadership or who are preparing for such positions - on a salaried or non-salaried basis.

One of the several sub-groups through which COWIM carries out its work is the Task Force on Gay Issues and Ministry. The Task Force's purpose is:

To focus on informing the Commission about issues affecting gay women in ministry through the development of educational resources.

This Resource Packet on Gay Issues and Ministry has been compiled by the Task Force as an aid to those seeking deeper understanding of gay persons and the problems faced by them and their families, especially as they relate to the Church. Further information may be obtained from the agencies which produced some of the materials.

Consultants and speakers are available to facilitate group discussions around this issue. Please contact NCC Professional Church Leadership, 475 Riverside Drive, (Room 770), New York, New York 10027. Feedback on the packet is encouraged: how do you use it? with what results? Etc.

Definitions of Terms used in Discussion of the Gay Issue: The following are definitions of some words as they are used in the enclosed material:

A Heterosexual is defined as a person whose primary emotional and/or sexual fulfillment is in relationship with someone of the opposite sex. Another term for this person is "straight."

A Homosexual is defined as a person whose primary emotional and/or sexual fulfillment is in relationship with someone of the same sex. A homosexually oriented woman is usually called a Lesbian. Increasingly, homosexuals are calling themselves "gay."

People who find fulfillment relating emotionally or sexually to someone of either sex, either a man or woman, are called "bisexuals."

Homophobia is an irrational fear or disgust about homosexuality and homosexuals.

Additional copies of this Resource Packet are available. Single copies are \$3.50 (enclose payment with order). Ten or more copies \$3.00 each, plus postage (you will be billed). Order from:

Professional Church Leadership
Division of Education and Ministry
475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 770
New York, New York 10027

